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The Philippine response to terrorism: the Abu Sayyaf Group

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THE PHILIPPINE RESPONSE TO TERRORISM: THE ABU SAYYAF GROUP

by

Eusaquito P. Manalo

December 2004

Thesis Advisor:	Gaye Christoffersen
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THE PHILIPPINE RESPONSE TO TERRORISM: THE ABU SAYYAF GROUP

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my "yearling" son at the Philippine Military Academy, Jose Mari, whom I have not seen during my 15 months of academic endeavors. May he also become an alumnus of the Naval Postgraduate School.
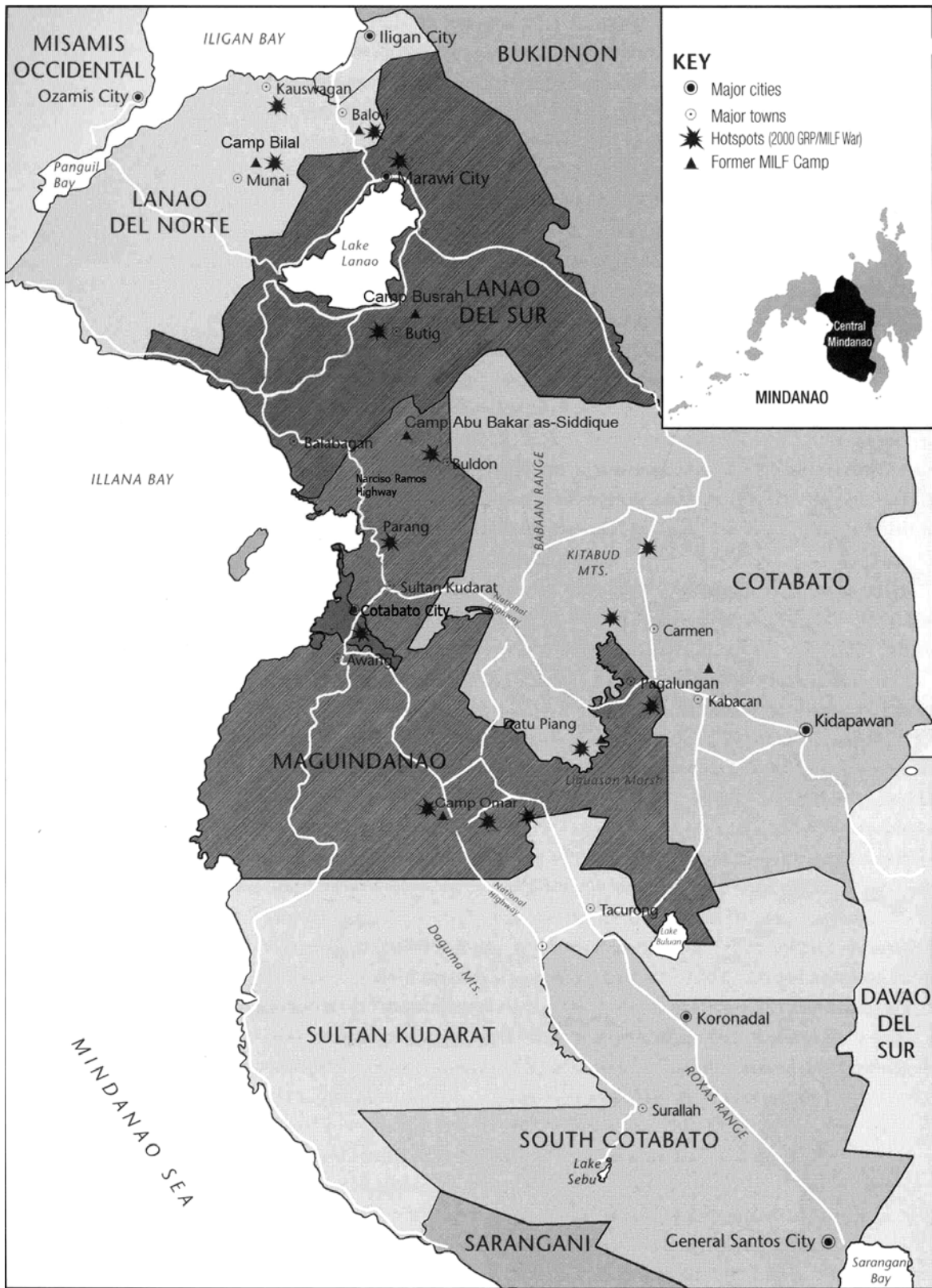
Map 1.   Southern Mindanao. [From: <www.icg.org>]

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Map 2.   The Philippines. [From: <www.icg.org>]

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Map 3.   Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. [From: <www.icg.org>]

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is back, and over the years, it has waned and waxed.[1] Having reached high points in the early and late 1970s, and again in the mid-1980s, and a low point in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it is now again on an upswing.[2] The emergence of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in the early 1990s represented the radicalization of the Filipino Muslim separatist movement. The group's first recorded operation was in 1991, when it attacked a military checkpoint on the outskirts of the town of Isabela, on Basilan Island.[3] The group was responsible for a series of kidnappings and attacks from 1993 to 1995, when a ceasefire between the government and the MNLF was holding throughout Mindanao. On 14 April 1995, Abu Sayyaf attacked the town of Ipil, robbing banks, and burning the town center and fleeing with 30 hostages, men, women, and children. The Ipil attack left 53 people dead and many wounded. On 25 March 2000, ASG's Janjalani faction kidnapped 58 students and teachers, including Catholic priest Father Roel Gallardo in Sumisip, Basilan. Six of the kidnap victims, and Father Gallardo were killed. A little more than a month after Janjalani's group carried out the elementary school kidnapping, the ASG group in Jolo took 21 hostages (10 Westerners, nine Malaysians, and two Filipinos) from a Sipadan diving resort in Malaysia.[4] The kidnap netted Abu Sayyaf $20 million in ransom money reportedly paid by Libya.[5] On 27 May 2001, another group of hostages, including three Americans, was seized at the Dos Palmas Resort on the Philippine island of Palawan, and taken to the group's Basilan stronghold. The kidnap

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[1] David Tucker, "Responding to Terrorism," <u>The Washington Quarterly</u> 21 (Winter 1998): 103.

[2] Ibid., 103.

[3] Angel Rabasa, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorists," The Adelphi Papers, Oxford Journals, 01 July 2003, <<u>http://www3.oup.co.uk/adelphi/hdb/volume_358/Issue_011</u>> (02 February 2004), 54.

[4] Maria Ressa, <u>Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operation in Southeast Asia</u> (NY: Free Press Simon and Schuster, 2003), 112.

[5] Rabasa, 54.

provoked a large-scale military operation that resulted in the death of a number of terrorists and hostages, as well as additional kidnappings.[6] The war on terrorism has changed the lives of the Filipinos and strained the capacities of the government. This war on terrorism presented several challenges and responses from the Philippine government. Over the years, the Philippines has combated terrorism in many ways. It has retaliated militarily, prosecuted terrorists, preempted terrorist attacks, implemented defensive measures, and addressed some of the causes of terrorism. To some degree, all suffer from limited effectiveness and applicability. The asymmetry between the terrorists, such as the ASG, and their victims, has placed the government at a disadvantage in the use of violence. An illustration pertains to the death of the American, Martin Burnham, during the military's Operation Daybreak against the ASG on 07 June 2002 in Basilan. The different methods used by the Philippine government to combat terrorism did not develop all at once or arbitrarily. The government has developed and adapted other methods as terrorism changed, and should be able to do so as terrorism changes in the future. In other words, the Philippine government should develop an effective strategy to counter terrorism. Therefore, questions need to be posed on how this war on terrorism, against Abu Sayyaf, be fought and on what or whom should this effort be focused? This is important as the Philippines' unstable political and economic conditions are compounded by the secessionist and terrorist problems mainly in the country's Muslim south. The focus of this thesis, therefore, is the assessment of the government strategy in its response to ASG's terrorism by examining the effectiveness of current government policies, including the governmental structure in counterterrorism.

The U.S. Department of State currently designates the Abu Sayyaf Group as one of the 28 Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO).[7] On 09 August 2002, the

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[6] Ibid., 54.

[7] U.S. Department of State, "2001 Report on Foreign Terrorist Organizations," 05 October 2001, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rpt/ftp/2001/5258pf.htm> (29 February 2004).

Communist Party of the Philippines was likewise designated an FTO. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front, although not on the U.S. Department of States' FTO list, continues to use terrorist methods and tactics to advance its political agenda of becoming an independent Islamic state. Some saw Abu Sayyaf as an international fundamentalist movement linked to Osama bin Laden, others as a group manipulated by the Armed Forces as a kind of agent provocateur, while others condemned it as no more than a bandit gang intent on amassing funds through kidnapping for ransom.[8] According to Putzel, "it was most likely a combination of all three," and while ASG was a loose coalition with some groups more committed to banditry than the pursuit of Islamic goals, key leaders of the organization represented a new radical Islam that gained considerable support throughout Basilan and the Sulu archipelago.[9] The Abu Sayyaf could not have survived 13 years of the military's pursuit without local support. The government has launched successive police and military operations in Basilan, Sulu, and the neighboring Zamboanga Peninsula, where the group has made some inroads. Over time, from 1991 to 2001, the military and police conducted search and destroy operations against the ASG. The reported successes of these operations resulted in the death of charismatic leader Janjalani, and his trusted deputy, Edwin Angeles. The reports of the military and police about their successes against the ASG gave the public the impression that the ASG has been effectively decimated and no longer capable of terrorizing the nation, until its re-emergence in April 2000, with an attack using high-powered speedboats on the island resort of Sipadan in Malaysia.[10] These daring and successful raids have not only proved that the group is still around and very much capable of executing terrorist attacks on soft targets, but it has also demonstrated its extended reach from its

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[8] James Putzel, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia and the U.S.-Philippine Alliance," in Global Responses To Terrorism: 9/11, Afghanistan and Beyond, eds. Mary Buckley and Rick Fawn (NY: Routledge, 2003), 181.

[9] Ibid., 181.

[10] Alfredo Filler, "The Abu Sayyaf Group: A Growing Menace to Civil Society," Terrorism and Political Violence, 14, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 132.

bases on Basilan island.[11]   The Australian government said it has evidence that Abu Sayyaf has likely expanded its ties with transnational terrorist organizations and developed its own terrorist repertoire.[12] Australia is worried that Abu Sayyaf might evolve from a small kidnap gang into a full-fledged international terrorist group.[13]   Abu Sayyaf, generally regarded as a small band of bandits with an initial aim of establishing a separate Islamic state, has proven in the past that it could execute attacks on lightly guarded or "soft" targets, the same way international terrorist groups have been known to do.

In the past decade, as Gunaratna asserts, "the center of gravity of terrorists," shifted from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region.[14]   Accordingly, the shift essentially occurred when Lebanon was replaced by Afghanistan as the "major center of international terrorist training" in the early 1990s. The terrorist elements then diffused into parts of Central Asia (Tajikistan, Afghanistan), South Asia (Kashmir, Pakistan), and Southeast Asia (Philippines, Indonesia).[15]   The Southeast Asian sub-region of the Asia-Pacific has 20 percent of the world's 1.2 billion Muslims from Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, and the Philippines. These areas have difficult-to-police maritime boundaries with parts of the Southern Philippines, such as Basilan, as well as Sulawesi and Maluku in Indonesia, which are relatively "ungoverned" and may prove to be potential lawless regions where it is easy for terrorist cells and terrorist groups to breed.[16] As far as Al Qaeda is concerned, its infiltration into Southeast Asia commenced in the early 1990s when Osama bin Laden forged a personal relationship with

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11 Ibid., 132.

12 Marvin Sy, "Sayyaf May Become International Terror Group- Australia," The Philippine Star, 21 July 2004, <http://www.philstar.com> (24 July 2004).

13 Ibid., 1.

14 Rohan Gunaratna, "Terrorist Trends and Patterns in the Asia-Pacific Region," in The New Terrorism: Anatomy, Trends, and Counter-Strategies," eds. Andrew Tan and Kumar Ramakrishna (Singapore: Eastern University Press, 2002), 129.

15 Ibid., 129.

16 Kumar Ramakrishna and Andrew Tan, "The New Terrorism: Diagnosis and Prescriptions" in The New Terrorism: Anatomy, Trends, and Counter-Strategies," eds. Andrew Tan and Kumar Ramakrishna (Singapore: Eastern University Press, 2002), 12.

Abdurajak Janjalani, the founder of Abu Sayyaf.[17]   In preparation to wage his global campaign, bin Laden established ties with two dozen Islamic terrorist groups and political parties, including the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines; the Moro Islamic Liberation Front; the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan; the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party; the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria; al-Ansar Mujahidin in Chechnya; and Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia.[18]   The challenge today for the international community is not only to neutralize Al Qaeda but also its associated groups. Even if bin Laden is killed, the legacy he has established by creating a powerful international alliance of terrorist groups will continue to pose a threat to international security.[19]

When Macapagal-Arroyo assumed the presidency in January 2001, her government adopted a three-pronged strategy to deal with the Islamic movement in Mindanao. First, the administration moved to revive peace talks with the MILF. Second, the administration threw its support behind a faction of the MNLF that had challenged Governor Misuari's leadership and first endorsed the holding of a new referendum on autonomy in August 2001 and then the elections within the Autonomous region to follow in November, both of which were opposed by Misuari. Third, her government declared "total war" against Abu Sayyaf, expressing its determination to bring the kidnapping crisis to an end and eliminate the terrorist group.[20]   The events of September 11 allowed the Macapagal-Arroyo government to put the Islamic movement on the defensive because of ASG's connection with Al Qaeda's international network of terrorists. The events of September 11 also became a political opportunity for her administration to seek and receive the direct assistance of the United States in the war against terrorism in Mindanao.   However, the intransigent attitude of

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[17] Ramakrishna and Tan, 13.

[18] Rohan Gunaratna, "Al-Qaeda: Organization and Operations," in Global Responses to Terrorism: 9/11, Afghanistan and Beyond, eds. Mary Buckley and Rick Fawn (NY: Routledge, 2003), 37.

[19] Ibid., 37.

[20] Putzel, 182.

some government officials towards Muslim aspirations in Mindanao, including the failure to improve the unfair socio-economic conditions of the Muslims, was contributing to the rise of Islamic opposition.

A.   PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this thesis is to examine the Philippine government's response to terrorism and determine how it should develop an effective strategy to counter terrorism. In order to accomplish this, the thesis examines the organizational structure and the problems faced by the Philippine government agencies in addressing the terrorism specifically posed by the Abu Sayyaf Group. Secondly, the thesis will analyze Abu Sayyaf's organizational and operational tools, its cohesion, existence, and maintenance of their terrorist capability. Finally, this thesis will examine the government bureaucracy, and its capability to respond well to the threats posed by terrorism.

B.   IMPORTANCE

The Philippines' unstable political and economic conditions are compounded by the secessionist and terrorist problems mainly in the country's Muslim south. One of the major security concerns of the present Macapagal-Arroyo government is the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Abdurazzak Abubakar Janjalani, a Tausug who participated as a mujahideen in the Afghanistan war in the late 1980s, founded the group. Abu Sayyaf split from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1991 to propagate Islam through a jihad in Mindanao and Sulu Islands whose goal is an independent Islamic state. The United States has included the ASG in its list of foreign terrorist organizations and has been linked with Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network. Philippine authorities believe that the ASG has connections with Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who was sentenced to 240 years in solitary confinement in connection with the World Trade Center bombing in 1993.

Thus, looking over the historical perspective of this long-running conflict, it is important that the Philippine government seriously address the ASG threat and develop an adequate strategic response.

C.   METHODOLOGY

The primary methodology used in this thesis is to gather empirical evidence of Philippine responses to terrorism based on previous studies and publications that examine the counterterrorism experience of the Philippine government.

This thesis focuses on three central questions of the Philippine response to terrorism: What are the organizational/structural problems faced by the Philippine government in countering the terrorism specifically posed by the Abu Sayyaf Group? How did the Philippine government respond to Abu Sayyaf's terrorism including its responses to ASG's use of organizational and operational tools? Also, what are the strategies that the government must undertake in order to address the ASG threat?

In answering these central questions, several subsidiary questions emerge in the case study of ASG:

- What were the roles played by the Philippine bureaucracy vis-à-vis the national policy to combat terrorism?
- How did Abu Sayyaf utilize their organizational capabilities (ideology, leadership, recruitment) and operational tools (command and control, training, weapons, logistics) in the maintenance of their terrorist capability?
- What are the Philippine government capabilities and the institutional changes needed in its response to terrorism?

D.   THESIS ORGANIZATION

Chapter II discusses the Philippine government structure in counterterrorism. It examines the roles played by various department and agencies in combating the rise of Philippine terrorist radical Islamic groups through a range of political, economic, and military means. This chapter also

focuses on the Philippine counterterrorism policy enunciated by the Macapagal-Arroyo administration, the interagency coordination and use of intelligence in the Philippine bureaucracy, and the role played by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Chapter II also provides an overview of the Philippine government national policy articulated through the "Fourteen Pillars of Policy and Action against Terrorism," including Memorandum Order number 37 that specifies the measures to be undertaken by the Philippine government in international cooperation against terrorism.

Chapter III presents the case study of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). This chapter, using Cragin and Daly's framework on terrorist organizational and operational tools, explains Abu Sayyaf's ideology, leadership, and recruitment. It also explains ASG's operational tools of command and control, training, weapons and logistics. This chapter also introduces the reader to ASG's use of organizational and operational tools in the maintenance of their terrorist capability. Moreover, this chapter critically examines ASG's domestic and international links and its continuous existence despite the joint Philippine and U. S. counterterrorism response against them.

Chapter IV examines the Philippine government response to terrorism. This chapter critically examines the joint Philippines and U. S. counterterrorism responses against Abu Sayyaf. It also analyzes the government's capabilities, the needed institutional change, and the weakness of the bureaucracy in its response to terrorism. This chapter also mentions the failure of legislation that should have been an important aspect in countering terrorism.

Finally, Chapter V provides a conclusion and outlines policy recommendations.

II.   THE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN COUNTERTERRORISM

A.   INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 forced a paradigm shift in the thinking of the Philippine government about national security. As Zachary Abuza mentions, "the impact of 9/11 on the Philippines and other Southeast Asian governments was enormous, forcing them to confront a radically changed security environment."[21]   The Philippine government, as a national policy, proscribes and abhors violence and terrorism committed by any group, regardless of orientation, to attain political or criminal ends.[22]   It considers terrorism a criminal act and shall ensure the speedy investigation and prosecution of cases, deportation or extradition of suspects and the suppression of activities of public and private entities working as front organizations or aiding and abetting terrorism.[23]   According to William Farrell, "terrorism is not constant; it waxes and wanes; and there are several aspects that make counterterrorism task difficult."[24]   He further argues,

> an effective action by the government in countering hijacking may have no effect on reducing the incidents of bombing or kidnapping. The government must respond to the many aspects of a problem contained under the one label terrorism.[25]

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[21] Zachary Abuza, <u>Militant Islam in Southeast Asia, Crucible of Terror</u> (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 2.

[22] "National Plan To Address Terrorism and Its Consequences". <u>Annex K to the Philippine National Internal Security Plan (NISP)</u> (2002), 9.

[23] Ibid., 69.

[24] William Regis Farrell, <u>The U.S. Government Response to Terrorism, In Search of An Effective Strategy</u> (Colorado: Westview Press, 1982), 69.

[25] Ibid., 69.

Under the Philippines' National Internal Security Plan (NISP),[26] the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) exemplifies the threat posed by terrorism. NISP also deals with the threats posed by the communist New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. As Steven Rogers contends,

> the Philippine government has the capacity to do so - it controls the money, the justice system, and the armed forces - but it lacks the will. Manila's elites seem reluctant to start a trend that might eventually result in restrictions on their own power.[27]

This chapter argues that there is a need to enhance the organizational structure of the agencies of the Philippine government to address the terrorism posed by the Abu Sayyaf Group. This persistent terrorism of ASG, since its inception during the 1990's, gave the Philippine a lingering bad image of its counterterrorism policy.

Moreover, the purpose of this chapter is to analyze the roles played by various departments and agencies vis-à-vis the national policy to combat terrorism. This chapter also focuses on the Philippines counterterrorism policy, the interagency coordination, the intelligence in the bureaucracy, and the role of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. An understanding of the structure of organizations, as channels of policy actions, will aid greatly in comprehending the difficulty in countering the serious threat posed by terrorism.[28]

B.   COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY

In responding to the need to maintain security for its people, the Philippines under the Macapagal-Arroyo administration, formulated a national policy to combat terrorism. Accordingly, the Philippine government adheres to international covenants on terrorism. As an active member of the United

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[26] National Internal Security Plan (NISP) was based on President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's Executive Order No. 21, S- 2001, creating a coordinative and integrative system on international security.

[27] Steven Rogers, "Beyond the Abu Sayyaf," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 1 (2004), Pro Quest Database (17 March 2004).

[28] Farrell, 2.

Nations, it reaffirms its commitment to prevent, suppress and counter all forms of terrorist acts in accordance with the UN charter, resolutions or declarations, and other relevant international laws. It shall endeavor to work closely with the regional and international community, particularly with the ASEAN, the United States and other allies, in order to strengthen the global cooperation to combat international terrorism.[29]

The Philippine primer defines terrorism, "as the premeditated use or threatened use of violence or means of destruction perpetrated against innocent civilians or non-combatants, or against civilian and government properties, usually intended to influence an audience."[30]   Its methods are hostage taking, piracy or sabotage, assassination, threats, hoaxes, and indiscriminate bombings or shootings. The primer further mentions that terrorism shall include but be not limited to:[31] 1) hijacking or sabotage of an aircraft, vessel or vehicle; 2) kidnapping, detaining without consent, of a person or persons; 3) the use of any biological and/or chemical agent, or radioactive material, or nuclear devise, explosive, firearm or other weapon, with the intent to endanger, directly or indirectly, the safety of one or more individuals, or to cause great damage to property; 4) cyber terrorism which includes the unauthorized access to, destruction or disruption of government data and finally 5) the act of assisting terrorists in any way in the commission of their crime, as an accessory or accessories.

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[29] "National Plan To Address Terrorism and Its Consequences". <u>Annex K to the Philippine National Internal Security Plan (NISP)</u> (2002), 10.

[30] Philippine Primer on the National Plan to Address Terrorism and Its Consequences (2002), 2.

[31] Ibid., 2.

Moreover, the Philippine government national policy is articulated through the "Fourteen Pillars of Policy and Action Against Terrorism,"[32] to wit:

1. Supervision and implementation of policies and actions of the government against terrorism.

2. Intelligence coordination

3. Internal focus against terrorism

4. Accountability of public and private corporations and personalities

5. Synchronizing internal efforts with global outlook.

6. Legal measures

7. Promotion of Christian and Muslim solidarity

8. Vigilance against the movement of terrorists and their supporters, equipment, weapons and funds.

9. Contingency plans

10. Comprehensive security plans for critical infrastructure.

11. Support of overseas Filipino workers.

12. Modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

13. Media support

14. Political, social and economic measures

Memorandum Order number 37 further specifies the following measures that shall be undertaken in connection with the government's commitment to cooperate in the international struggle against terrorism:[33]

- Join the international counter terrorist coalition and work with the United Nations

- Work closely with the United States on intelligence and security matters concerning terrorism;

- Make available Philippine airspace and facilities if the latter are required as transit or staging point;

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[32] "Fourteen (14) Pillars of Policy and Action Against Terrorism" as enumerated in Memorandum Order No. 31 dated October 12, 2001 by the Office of the President, in National Plan to Address Terrorism AND Its Consequences, Annex K to the Philippine National Internal Security Plan (NISP) (2002).

[33] Philippine Primer on the National Plan to Address Terrorism and Its Consequences (2002), 4.

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- Contribute logistical support in the form of food supplies, medicine and medical personnel;

- Subject to the concurrence of the Philippine Congress, provide combat troops if there is an international call for such troops; and

- Prevent the flow of funds to terrorist groups in accordance with the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001 (Philippine Republic Act No. 9160) and other laws.

The Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security (COC - IS)[34] has been supervising the implementation of all policies and actions of the Philippine government against violence and terrorism. The COC–IS handles crisis situations at the national level that evolve into national security concerns. The COC–IS serves as the Cabinet Crisis Management Committee (CCMC), with the Executive Secretary as Chairman.

The COC-IC has not been proactive in its counterterrorism policy. The Bush administration has quietly warned the Philippine government that it has not been doing enough to crack down on terrorists groups in the country.[35] The diplomatic reproach was delivered to President Macapagal-Arroyo on 22 March 2004 with Australia and Britain joining the warning.[36] In spite of the recent death of Abu Sayyaff Hamsiraji Sali and five of his men during an encounter with Philippine Scout Rangers at Basilan Island on 08 April 2004, there is still a high level of tension for a possible terrorist attack. The warning the Americans delivered to the Philippines is similar to the one delivered to the Indonesian government weeks before the attacks in Bali in October 2002.[37]

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[34] The Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security (COC – IS) is headed by the Executive Secretary of the President with almost all the cabinet secretaries of the President as members.

[35] Raymond Bonner and Carlos Conde, "U.S. Warns the Philippines on Terror Groups," New York Times on the Web, 11 April 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/11/international/asia/11FILI.html (11 April 2004).

[36] Ibid., 2.

[37] Ibid., 1.

C.   INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION

Critical to the implementation of the National Plan to address terrorism is the effective and efficient integration of efforts and responses of the entire government machinery. There is a need for interagency coordination between the different departments and agencies that requires identifying areas of exclusivity, coordination, and integration to ensure a unity of efforts. The Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), along with the Departments of Energy, Transportation and Communication, and Justice, should forge the vital link with the National Security Adviser (NSA) Office to mount an efficient collective effort against terrorism. According to Lynn Davis, "coordination is a word more used than understood in government."[38] Davis contends that "if decisions or actions are left to individual departments operating separately, there will be a risk of mistakes, lost opportunities, policies at odds with another or actions that diverge from the President's goal's."[39]   The most significant examples are the government incompetence in handling the Abu Sayyaf's "Sipadan hostage-taking" on 23 April 2000 and the "Dos Palmas kidnap-for-ransom" incidents on 28 May 2001. Captain Ruben Guinolbay, company commander of the Philippine Army's elite scout rangers, related in a public hearing at Congress how his unit was ordered into bandit-infested Basilan on short notice but was not given its proper complement of heavy weaponry.[40]   The House Committee on Defense has investigated the allegations that military officers had saved the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers, who were holding 18 Filipino and American hostages, from certain annihilation.[41]

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[38] Lynn Davis, Gregory F. Treverton and others, "Coordinating the War on Terrorism", RAND, March 2004 <http://www.rand.org> (09 April 2004), 2.

[39] Ibid., 2.

[40] Breaking News, "Scout Army Captain Relates June 2 Ambush in Lamitan," INQ7.net, 24 August 2001, <http://archive.inq7.net/archive/2001-p/2001/aug/24/brkpol_22-1.htm> (2 April 2004).

[41] Ibid., 1.

On the other hand, Nathan White argues, "even if agencies choose not to develop aggressive counterterrorist intelligence systems, officers will still be called to terrorist scenes as first responders."[42] The nature of terrorism in the Philippines forced the local police and area military forces to participate if the terrorist acts occur in their area of responsibility. When reinforcement or other agencies arrive on the scene, they will still coordinate or interact with a host of other units.

As an immediate response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Philippine government adopted a two-pronged approach in addressing terrorism and its consequences management.   The first approach is crisis management that pertains to activities occurring while a terrorist incident is taking place, while the second approach is consequence management that refers to managing the event after a terrorist attack has occurred. According to NPTC,[43] "success in preventing, preparing for and responding to terrorist attacks will depend upon the establishment and maintenance of a coordinated crisis and consequence management infrastructures." NPTC further mentions that the roles of participating agencies are defined and their efforts synchronized in each of the stages of the phases of crisis management and consequence management. Close coordination among the different agencies involved is enjoined to achieve synergy, and the overlap provides the opportunity to develop interoperability among the various agencies of government addressing the terrorist threat. The level of intervention of the police and military in any of the stages is determined by the degree of the terrorist threat that develops. Accordingly, the police and military take the lead role when the situation requires armed intervention.

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[42] Nathan White, Defending the Homeland: Domestic Intelligence, Law Enforcement, and Security (CA: Thomson/ Wadsworth, 2004), 80.

[43] NPTC (National Plan to Address Terrorism and Its Consequences), 11.

Afterwards, the police and military revert to their supporting roles when the crisis is resolved and post action activities are undertaken to restore normalcy and bring those responsible to court.[44]

The Philippines followed the COC-IS organizational structure and became effective, mostly in natural disasters coordination. The COC-IS (Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security) that handles crisis or counterterrorism situations at the national level also handles the National Peace and Order Council (NPOS). The Secretary of the Interior and Local Government (SILG) chairs the NPOC with the Secretary of National Defense (SND); the Secretary of Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Secretary of Department of Justice (DOJ); the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; the Chief of the Philippine National Police; and private sector representative as members.

According to Nathan White, in early 2001, the U.S. Federal Government developed an Interagency Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan (CONPLAN) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as the lead agency. It involves a system of responses of six federal agencies to domestic terrorism. By coordinating the response of its major agencies, the federal government hopes to interact effectively with state and local governments after a terrorist attack.[45]

White also explains that, "the federal government originally divided its defensive approach into crisis management and consequence management, but a bipartisan committee on national security mentions that the federal government is spending too much time looking at the difference between crisis and consequence management."[46] The bipartisan committee also argues that law enforcement should have the lead role in the initial stages of consequence management time. The Bush administration ended the dichotomy between the

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44 Ibid., 16.

45 White., 81.

46 Ibid., 82.

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crisis and consequence management with the signing of Homeland Security Act approach on November 25, 2002.[47] This approach seeks to escape the problem of interagency coordination by concentrating terrorism missions in a single agency.[48] The Macapagal-Arroyo administration still uses the crisis and consequence management approach in its counterterrorism through the NPTC (National Plan to Address Terrorism and its Consequences).[49]

On the other hand, Paul Pillar argues "no single approach makes an effective counterterrorist policy, and terrorism can be addressed by solving root conditions, capabilities of terrorists, intentions or motives of terrorist groups, and defenses against attacks."[50] The United States' four approaches to managing terrorism are all failed approaches: the Clinton administration command and control approach; the lead agency approach; the Department of Homeland and Security approach; and the appointment of a White House coordinator or czar.[51]

Relating these four models to the Philippine situation seems difficult. Although the Philippine government has been using the "lead agency approach", the other three (3) approaches might not be effective in the Philippine setting unless there is an improvement in the bureaucracy and political institutions. According to Zachary Abuza,

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[47] ibid, 82-85

[48] Ashton Carter, "The Architecture of Government in the Face of Terrorism" in Countering Terrorism, Dimensions and Preparedness, eds. Arnold Hewitt and Robyn Pangi (MA: The MIT Press, 2003), 24.

[49] Philippine Primer on the National Plan to Address Terrorism and Its Consequences (2002), 17.

[50] Paul Pillar, Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institutions Press, 2003), 29.

[51] Ashton Carter, "The Architecture of Government in the Face of Terrorism" in Countering Terrorism, Dimensions and Preparedness, eds. Arnold Hewitt and Robyn Pangi (MA: The MIT Press, 2003), 23.

most Southeast Asian states are weak, characterized by weak political institutions, decentralized politics, poor resources, and plagued by endemic corruption. The lack of strong central government control has always attracted Al-Qaida.[52]

Like other Southeast Asian countries, the Philippines is a country of convenience, which makes it attractive to terrorist groups who rely on the same infrastructure used by transnational criminals.[53] The countries and institutions in Southeast Asia are so fractionalized and cannot even decide on a common agenda within their borders, as such Philippine public officials deny the scope of the terrorist threat despite the intelligence services gathering the information.[54] Abuza also mentions that security in weak states is plagued by endemic corruption and rivalry occurs between the army and police forces over turf and illegal business empires. Most police and militaries in Southeast Asia rely on extra-budgetary sources of income to finance their operations.[55] Another problem pertains to the porous borders of the Philippine archipelago including the ineffective immigration and visa procedures in which the lack of a computerized immigration database facilitates an easy change of identities for would be terrorists. It would be a challenge to coordinate and implement the counterterrorism policy operationally because the existing capabilities of governmental structure fall far short of what is needed.

D. INTELLIGENCE IN THE BUREAUCRACY

The success in combating terrorism is predicated on the availability of timely and accurate intelligence. One approach to assuring timely information in combating terrorism involves conventional human and technical intelligence capabilities that penetrate terrorist groups and their support systems. An equally important approach is through investigative police efforts. Collecting tactical

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[52] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia, Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2003), 18.

[53] Ibid., 18.

[54] Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror, An Eyewitness Account of Al-Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press Simon and Schuster, Inc, 2003), 6.

[55] Abuza, 19.

police intelligence aids in monitoring terrorists' activities and may be crucial to tracking terrorist bands. The national intelligence effort relies on collection and liaison arrangements that exist also with many friendly governments.

Long-term intelligence programs to combat terrorism involve the collection and analysis of data that address history, culture, religion, politics, psychology, and security conditions. The requirement for accurate analysis applies both to long-term threat assessments and to support incident management. All terrorism-related intelligence collection and analysis must be directed toward the production and dissemination of clear, concise, and accurate threat warnings and assessments to decision makers in time for them to take the necessary action.

The Philippine Intelligence Community was shaken by accusations of "failure" to predict the strategy, tactics and movements of the Abu Sayyaf Group. Whether this accusation was warranted is debatable; what is important is that the intelligence community cannot afford to waste time in the collection, analysis and dissemination of information and intelligence regarding the Abu Sayyaf and other threats to national security. The intelligence units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) play important roles in the counterterrorism efforts of the Philippine government.

According to Campbell and Flournoy, "intelligence enables all other components of the campaign against terrorism to be effective, from homeland security to law enforcement military and covert operations, and coalition building."[56] Policymakers rely on processed and analyzed information given by the intelligence community. Policy makers have a constant need for tailored, timely intelligence that will provide background, context, information, warning,

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[56] Kurt Campbell and Michelle Flournoy, To Prevail An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies Press, 2001), 78.

and an assessment of risks, benefits, and likely outcomes.[57]   As Lowenthal mentions, "There is a strict dividing line between intelligence and policy; the government is run by and for the policymakers and intelligence has a support role and may not cross over into the advocacy of policy choices."[58]

Corollary to this is the Philippine's National Security Council (NSC), which is the principal adviser of the president pertaining to intelligence and security issues. It assists the president in analyzing and integrating the national security policy and strategy. Intelligence, ideally, from AFP, PNP, NBI, and NICA goes to the NSC.   However, Philippine bureaucracy presents no exception to modern organizational theories.   It seems simple that defense and intelligence communities gather information concerning possible terrorist activities in the Philippines.   The NBI, NICA, AFP, and PNP are all tasked as the agencies responsible for domestic terrorism. The NBI, as with NICA and AFP, are loosely linked to the Philippine National Police.   The different intelligence agencies regularly meet at the national level and the regional level's RICC (Regional Intelligence Coordinating Committee),[59] and it would seem that intelligence could be readily shared on a need-to-know basis. However, interagency rivalries, laws, and turf protection reduces the possibility of shared information. According to White, "police executives are fiercely autonomous, and law enforcement agencies and intelligence bureaus rarely trust one another."[60] White contends that "intelligence agencies collect information for defense of the country while the police agencies collect information for prosecution, and the real difference is not based on bureaucratic rivalries but differences based on the constitutional

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[57] Mark Lowenthal, Intelligence, From Secrets to Policy (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2003), 3.

[58] Ibid., 3.

[59] The AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) Major Service 2's, PNP's Intelligence units, NBI and NICA have its own personnel who regularly meet during RICC to discuss important operational and tactical intelligence. The author has been a member of RICC at Region I and Cordillera before attending NPS.

[60] Nathan White, Defending the Homeland: Domestic Intelligence, Law Enforcement, and Security (CA: Thomson/ Wadsworth, 2004), 17.

use of government power."[61] Stated simply, the police are reluctant to share information inside and outside their organizations. This attitude has a negative impact on all criminal investigations, and the effects spill over into counterterrorism.[62] The intelligence services in Southeast Asia are often overly politicized and engaged in fierce bureaucratic infighting when confronting organized crime, human and drug smuggling and money laundering.[63] Most Filipino case officers keep their own files and do not necessarily share them with others outside their units, and there is no single central data bank.[64] The main problem of this war on terror is the inability of law-enforcement officials and investigators on the ground to share their information with one another and with other nations."[65] The intelligence agents are not only fighting to uncover information about terrorist networks, but often have to fight, at a great personal risk, to get their information passed up the chain of command, and struggle even harder to get the politicians to act on it.[66]

Intelligence coordination is particularly important in decisions to warn the public about the threat level, and once the government has decided to issue the warning, it is hard to know when the threat is over since no standard exists by which to judge, and often, no intelligence exists to confirm that the threat has passed.[67] Philippine intelligence has no higher task than to solve all the puzzling information about terrorist threats. The government must swiftly identify and prioritize shortfalls not only to end the Abu Sayyaf threat but other terrorist threats as well.   It is essential to undertake a comprehensive plan and restructuring of the intelligence community to deal effectively with the new

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61 Ibid., 19.

62 Jonathan White, Terrorism, An Introduction (CA: Wadswoth Group, 2002), 279.

63 Abuza, 19.

64 Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror, An Eyewitness Account of Al-Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press-Simon and Schuster, Inc., 2003), 5.

65 Ibid., 5.

66 Ibid., 5.

67 Lynn Davis, Gregory F. Treverton and others, "Coordinating the War on Terrorism", RAND, March 2004 <http://www.rand.org> (09 April 2004), 9.

terrorism. It is also imperative to handle overlapping missions and functions of the Philippine intelligence agencies accordingly. The shortfalls in intelligence sharing, intelligence databases, collection efforts, intelligence fusion and human intelligence should be solved immediately. These shortfalls must have a plan of action that should address policy, people, processes or technology in order to combat terrorism in the years to come.

E.   MILITARY STRUCTURE AND ITS CAPABILITIES

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), although a part of the executive branch, has been likened by many political scientists to another branch of the Philippine government.[68]   This large armed services bureaucracy, composed of the Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force, was conceived primarily for internal security, and lacks the modern equipment that its neighboring countries' military services have to combat external threats.[69]   The defense program of the Philippines is to overcome primarily the acute equipment obsolescence resulting partly, if not entirely, from the country's total dependence on the United States for protection when the U.S. bases were still in the Philippines.[70]

According to Paul Pillar, "military force along with diplomacy, criminal justice system, interdiction of financial assets, and intelligence are counterterrorism instruments of statecraft."[71]   In addition, a military instrument, like diplomacy is a function of economic development. Government's capability to acquire sophisticated military arsenal and build a strong and capable armed forces depends on the country's economic status.[72]   As in other countries, the

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[68] Joaquin Gonzales III, "Philippines Continuing People Power" in Professor Gaye Christoffersen's NS 3664 Course Readings (13 April 2004), 268.

[69] Ibid.,268.

[70] Amitav Acharya, Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia, ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order (New York: Routledge, 2001), 140.

[71] Paul Pillar, Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institutions Press, 2003), 73.

[72] National Defense College of the Philippines, A National Security Framework for the Philippines   <http://apan-info.net/ndcp/occasional-papers/html/SeeFrame(Final%20Edit).htm> (10 March 2004), 11.

Philippine military has been the primary instrument in the fight against terrorism. As Jonathan White mentions, "the assumption behind the use of military force is a belief that the terrorist problem has become too great for the state's civil power."[73] He further argues, "when military forces are employed, governments feel that civilian police forces and the courts are no longer capable of dealing with violence."[74] This is the case when the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), who augmented the Philippine National Police in fighting the Abu Sayyaf, have grown too strong. One salient feature of the AFP Internal Security Operation (ISO) Plan "Bantay Laya" pertains to the continuous conduct of ISO nationwide to destroy the Abu Sayyaf at the earliest possible moment and decisively defeat the New Peoples Army and Moro Islamic Liberation Front.[75] This ISO mission originally belonged to the PNP but was given to the AFP during the later part of the Ramos administration. As Pillar explains, "military force should continue to be available as a counterterrorist instrument because it is a form of power with a clear advantage, and in some situations it will be the only way to respond publicly and emphatically to a terrorist outrage."[76] The AFP's crackdown in 2000 at Camp Abubakar, a sprawling complex run by the MILF for al-Qaeda and its associate groups such as the Abu Sayyaf, is the only way to respond to terrorism perpetrated by Abu Sayyaf at Mindanao. Lieutenant General Voltaire Gazmin in his book, *The Fall of Abubakar,* explains that "Camp Abubakar" is vaunted as the enemy's fortress and would have been a national shame and dishonor had the government failed to crush and dismantle its myth.

On the other hand, Booth and Dunne argue "the pursuit of military solution faces many obstacles especially when victory is defined broadly as a

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[73] Jonathan White, Terrorism, An Introduction (CA: Wadswoth Group, 2002), 277.

[74] Ibid., 277.

[75] Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) ISO plan 02-01 ("Bantay Laya") dated 24 February 2002.

[76] Paul Pillar, Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institutions Press, 2003), 109.

series of decisive actions against terrorist organizations."[77] The duo further contends, "choosing war fighting rather than crime fighting risked reproducing the logic of the terrorists that war is the only prevailing way."[78] According to Jonathan White, there are "four factors at the heart of controversy over military counterterrorist activities: 1) civil governments aversion to use military force to ensure domestic peace; 2) the overreaction on the part of military force; 3) military power deters terrorism or creates more terrorism; 4) the questions on the proper use of force by military."[79] This means that function of the military is not to enforce civil law, and it is the police that should enforce civil law. White also contends, "the use of military force to augment police power creates repression and more terrorism due to excess use of force against the terrorists."[80]

However, Campbell and Flournoy still argue that, "the military is an instrument of national power that should be used to protect and advance a broad range of a country's national interest." The duo further explains, "every potential military operation will have to be assessed not only in terms of immediate costs and benefits but also in the context of its likely impact on the ability to achieve long–term goals of the campaign."[81] The AFP and U.S. Armed Forces operations against Abu Sayyaf were successful in dismantling the organization, but the Abu Sayyaf still is far from being defeated. As Abuza mentions, "like the Al-Qaida organizations, it is a fluid organization with uncanny

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[77] Ken Booth and Tim Dunne, "Worlds in Collision" in Worlds in Collision, Terror and the Future of Global Order, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 12.

[78] Ibid., 13.

[79] Jonathan White, Terrorism, An Introduction (CA: Wadswoth Group, 2002), 66.

[80] Ibid., 67.

[81] Ibid., 70.

ability to recruit, indoctrinate, and reconstitute itself, and South East Asia including the Philippines will be an important theater of operation for it in the coming years."[82]

Although Admiral Thomas Fargo mentions that the Philippines is a strong partner both globally and regionally in the War on Terrorism,[83] the Philippine government should still address the AFP's capability shortfalls. Military capabilities on intelligence, mobility, firepower, communications and interoperability including command and control between the three armed services of the Army, Navy and Air Force, are critical to the counterterrorism campaign. The department of National Defense (DND) should undertake an "honest to goodness" assessment of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' capabilities required to support the campaign against terrorism. This requires organizational and structural arrangements for the AFP including innovative operational concepts and advanced systems. As Maria Ressa argues, "despite all allegations against the Philippine military, many Filipino soldiers display courage, persistence, and idealism. They work for little pay with patchy support in terms of personnel, and they are saddled with often antiquated equipment."[84] Fighting transnational crimes, insurgency, and terrorism require rethinking of the AFP's capabilities, operational concepts, organizations, and ways of cooperating with other key actors in the campaign.

F.   CONCLUSION

The Philippines have tried in the past, with only modest success, to combat the rise of terrorist radical Islamic groups through a range of political, economic and military means. The Philippine government structure and its instrumentalities have a vital role to play in the campaign against terrorism. The

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82 Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia, Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2003), 27.

83 Testimony of Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command before the House Armed Services Committee, United States House or Representatives on 31 March 2004. NS 3664 Handouts.

84 Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror, An Eyewitness Account of Al-Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press-Simon and Schuster Inc., 2003), 121.

campaign requires a thorough analysis and assessment of the Philippine Counterterrorism Policy, the inter-agency coordination, intelligence sharing, and improved and enhanced military structure and capabilities. Finally, the war on terrorism will become the nation's number one national security policy on the resurgence of terrorist activities of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Communist Party of the Philippines. The Abu Sayyaf threat has been diminished modestly but not completely. The Philippine government must forge an effective national strategy comprising of the proper social, economic, political, and military elements.

III. CASE STUDY: THE ABU SAYYAF GROUP (ASG)

A.   INTRODUCTION

What makes Southeast Asia such fertile ground for Al Qaeda is its large Muslim population within a political landscape that is much more open and fractured than the Arab Middle East.[85] Due to its large Muslim population, the Southeast Asian sub-region of the Asia-Pacific has received the most attention from Western officials and analysts following the ouster of the Taliban regime by the U.S.-led Coalition at the end of 2001.[86] This large Muslim population in Indonesia and Southern Philippines, such as Basilan, as well as Sulawesi and Maluku, has difficult-to-police maritime boundaries and may prove to be potential lawless regions for terrorist cells or groups to breed.[87] The emergence of internationally linked terrorist cells in Southeast Asia is a surprise to its government officials who were blinded by cognitive consistency and complacency.[88] The governments and security analysts ignored the fact that a number of hardcore militants, who espoused the use of violence to establish a pan-Islamic state, had taken root in the region.[89] The porous borders, "hawala" system or money laundering including Islamic charities attracted Al Qaeda to the region.   The extremists were able to develop closer financial political and financial links with militants, arm suppliers, drug dealers, and other shadowy forces.   The mix of socioeconomic marginalization, loosening political controls and vanishing borders has created a time bomb in the region.[90]   As Abuza

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[85] Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror: <u>An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia</u> (New York: Free Press Simon and Schuster Inc., 2003), 45.

[86] Andrew Tan and Kumar Ramakrishna, <u>The New Terrorism: Anatomy, Trends and Counter-Strategies</u> (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2002), 12.

[87] Ibid., 12.

[88] Zachary Abuza, "Learning by Doing: Al Qaeda's Allies in Southeast Asia," *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs* (April 2004): 172.

[89] Ibid., 172.

[90] Joshua Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East: Terror Targets the Pacific Rim," *The Washington Quarterly,* Winter 2001, <http://www.twq.com/winter01/kurlantzick.pdf> (23 June 2004), 20.

mentions, "Southeast Asia has long been a center for transnational criminal activity: not only money laundering, but also drug and gun running, people smuggling, and document forging."[91]   While terrorism differs from a transnational crime that has no profit motive, terrorists require a similar infrastructure. The lack of a strong central government in Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia and Philippines, has always attracted Al Qaeda.[92]

In the period since 9/11, efforts by law enforcement and intelligence organizations have revealed much that was previously unknown about these organizations, which fall into three types:[93] (1) international terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) whose agenda includes attacks on U.S. interests and the establishment of pan-Islamic "caliphate;" (2) social extremists such as Laskar Jihad in Indonesia that accept the existing national state but attack non-Muslim elements within it; (3) traditional Muslim separatists such as the MILF in the Southern Philippines that seek a separate Muslim state. The picture is greatly complicated by linkages between groups including JI and Al Qaeda, between Abu Sayyaf and Al Qaeda, and between JI and MILF. Further complications arise from links between elements of the Indonesian military and JI, and other similar groups. In short, the wiring diagram for terrorism in Southeast Asia would depict interactive networks with multiple agendas.[94]

Islam in the Philippines has been a source of separatist insurgency for decades, and the Philippine government has not managed it successfully over that time.[95] McKenna contends that the struggle for Muslim separatism in the Philippines exemplifies the political complexities found in similar political

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[91] Abuza, 172.

[92] Ibid., 172.

[93] Wilson Lee and Robert Hathaway, "U.S. Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region," *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Asia Program,* 5 May 2003, <http://www.ics.si.edu/topics/pubs/asiapacific_rpt_final.pdf> (23 June 2003), 58.

[94] Ibid., 58.

[95] Jim Rolfe, "Security in Southeast Asia: It's Not About the War on Terrorism," *Asia Pacific Security Studies,* June 2002, <http://www.apcss.org/Publications/APCSS/Security%20Asia.pdf> (23 June 2004), 3.

movements in post-colonial situations and it is possible to trace the remote causes of Muslim separatism in the Philippines to Western colonizers. The American colonial rulers encouraged the development of a self-conscious Philippine Muslim identity among a generation of educated Muslim elites who were divided by linguistic, geographic, and cultural barriers.[96] This Islamic consciousness intensities and the strengthening of ethno religious identities culminated in an Islamic insurgency against the Philippine state.[97] The United States was able to contain this insurgency but never eliminate it.[98] Abuza explains that the Philippines has a 400-year-old secessionist movement in the southern islands around Mindanao led by an aggrieved Muslim minority. The Muslim-dominated territory includes western Mindanao, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan, and the Sulu Archipelago. Today, 13 of the country's 67 provinces have significant, if not majority, Muslim populations.[99] In the majority-Catholic Philippines, the heavily Muslim southern island of Mindanao has 15 of the country's poorest provinces with the lowest life expectancy.[100] As Li and Schaub mention, "primary cause of transnational terrorism is underdevelopment and poverty, an argument that recently became popular among but was rarely formalized by policy makers and scholars."[101] Poor economic conditions create "terrorist breeding grounds," where disaffected populations turn to transnational terrorist activities as a solution to their problems.[102] Kurlantzick also argues that the economic and political desperation of these areas has fostered the hatred that

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[96] Thomas McKeena, Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separation in the Southern Philippines (CA: University of California Press, 1998), 132.

[97] Ibid., 133.

[98] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 35.

[99] Ibid., 34.

[100] Joshua Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East: Terror Targets the Pacific Rim," The Washington Quarterly, winter 2001, <http://www.twq.com/winter01/kurlantzick.pdf> (23 June 2004), 22.

[101] Quan Li and Drew Schaub, "Economic Globalization and Transnational Terrorism, A Pooled Time-Series Analysis," The Journal of Conflict Resolution 48, no. 2 (2004): 235.

[102] Ibid., 236.

bred separatist and splinter organizations willing to use terrorist tactics to achieve their goals. Abu Sayyaf, the Uighur rebels, Free Aceh separatists, and the Malaysian Islamic sect Al Ma'unah are a few examples of this trend.[103]

The security problems in Mindanao pertains to the Muslim secessionists and separatist movements led by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) during the early 1970's, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) since the late 1980's, as well as the more radical Abu Sayyaf in the past decade.

The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), originally known as the Mujahideen Commando Freedom Fighters, was first thought of as nothing more than a local (provincial) version of the MNLF and/or MILF, a breakaway faction of the former movement.[104] However, the ASG is the violent offshoot of the MNLF whose chilling name means "bearer of the sword," and has raided resorts, taken tourists hostage, captured Christian villages and slit the throats of residents, and allegedly blown up Manila shopping centers.[105]

This chapter, using Cragin and Daly's framework on terrorist organizational and operational tools, argues that Abu Sayyaf's organizational capabilities: ideology, leadership, and recruitment sustain its cohesion and existence. The operational tools of command and control, training, weapons and logistics provide the necessary sustaining capability against offensives by government forces. The key to Abu Sayyaf's survival has been its ability to adapt to its environment in Basilan, Sulu, and Central Mindanao. It exists where resistance to the state is deeply embedded and where the government is weak in places where ASG operates. This chapter also introduces the reader to Abu Sayyaf's use of organizational and operational tools in the maintenance of their terrorist capability.

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[103] Kurlantzick, 22.

[104] Alfredo Filler, "The Abu Sayyaf Group: A Growing Menace to Civil Society," Terrorism and Political Violence 14, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 131.

[105] Kurlantzick, 21.

Moreover, this chapter critically examines Abu Sayyaf's domestic and international links and its continuous existence despite the joint Philippines and U.S. counter terrorism response against them.

B. IDEOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

1. Ideology

With regards to terrorism, the term ideology means the consensus of grievances and objectives that a terrorist group is trying to address through violence.[106] The terrorists' ideologies may take on many forms, e.g., religious or political, but still has the same purpose of motivating actions, unifying members, and linking the organization to communities for which it purports to fight.[107] Ranstorp contends that religious fanaticism is a principal motivation for terrorism, and asserts that followers of various faiths, such as Islam, Judaism, and Japanese cults, are often led to perform terrorist acts. He argues that religious terrorism is a type of political violence that is motivated by a sense of spiritual crisis and a reaction to social and political changes.[108]

The Abu Sayyaf Group first emerged in 1989 under the leadership of Abdujarak Janjalani, the son of a fisherman on Basilan Island, who had become connected with a Muslim fundamentalist movement, Al Islamic Tabligh, in the 1980's.[109] The group under him is committed to the establishment of an exclusive, independent Islamic Theocratic State of Mindanao (MIS), and is infused with a highly intolerant religious credo that calls for the deliberate and

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[106] Sidney Tarrow cited in Kim Cragin and Sara Daly, <u>The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World</u> (CA: RAND Project Air Force, 2004), 29.

[107] Kim Cragin and Sara Daly, <u>The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World</u> (CA: RAND Air Force, 2004), 30.

[108] Magnus Ranstorp, "Religious Fanaticism Motivates Terrorists" in <u>Terrorism: Opposing Viewpoints ed. Laura Egendorf</u> (CA: Greenhaven Press, 2000), 59.

[109] Larry Niksch, "Abu Sayyaf: Target of Philippine-U.S. Anti-Terrorism Cooperation," in <u>World Terrorism, ed. Edward Linden</u> (NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2002), 51.

systematic targeting of all southern Filipino Christians.[110] In the pursuit of this objective, the ASG has explicitly defined its ideological and operational agenda as intimately tied to an integrated effort aimed at asserting the global dominance of Islam through armed struggle.[111] The ASG, the smallest and most radical of the Islamic separatist groups in the southern Philippines, engages in bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, and extortion to promote an independent Islamic state in western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, areas in the Southern Philippines heavily populated by Muslims.[112] However, Bandow argues, "the group operates more like criminals than terrorists and are usually satisfied by collecting ransom – about $20 million in 2000."[113] As Gracia Burnham would later say, despite all the talk of religion, their motivation was simple: "the bottom line was money."[114] While there have been signs of an internal rupturing of the ASG along criminal lines since the 1998 death of its radically fundamentalist founder, Janjalani, the group continues to exhibit a strong identification with the goals and rhetoric of global Islamic extremism.[115] The string of Western kidnappings staged by the group in 2000, for instance, while undoubtedly motivated by financial imperatives, were also aimed at securing the release of Ramzi Yousef, Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman (similarly convicted for the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing) and other Muslims imprisoned in the United States on terrorist charges.[116] On the other hand, Byman argues that ethnic terrorism

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[110] Peter Chalk, "Al Qaeda and Its Links to Terrorist Groups in Asia," in The New Terrorism: Anatomy, Trends and Counter Strategies, eds. Andrew Tan and Kumar Rama Krishna (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2002), 113.

[111] Ibid., 113.

[112] Kurt Campbell and Michelle Flournoy, To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies Press, 2001), 376.

[113] Doug Bandow, "Our War Against Bandits," Cato Institute, 18 January 2002, <http://www.cato.org/cgi-bin/scripts/printtech.cgi/current/terrorism/pubs/bandow-020118.html> (23 June 2004).

[114] Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press Simon and Schuster Inc., 2003), 111.

[115] Chalk, 114.

[116] Ibid., 114.

differs from terrorism executed in the name of ideology, religion, or economic gain.[117] He acknowledges the growing influence of religion on terrorism, but he believes ethnic terrorism is a unique entity, even though the line between ethnic and religious violence is blurred. Ethnic terrorists are usually more nationalistic and more easily forge a national identity than their religious counterparts. Accordingly, White uses evidence from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LITE), the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), and the Basque National and Liberty (ETA) as evidence of ethnic terrorism.[118] Violence plays a special role in ethnic terrorism. Whereas political terrorists use violence in a symbolic manner and religious extremists use it to make a theological statement, violence is the *raison d'être* of ethnic terrorism. It keeps an idea alive. As long as a bomb goes off or a police officer is murdered, it is not possible to deny the identity and existence of ethnic differences. However, in the Philippines, Ressa argues, "there are separatist groups that are often lumped together but in fact can vary from mafia-like shakedown artists to true Muslim extremists."[119] Moreover, violence sustains the conflict, even when political objectives are far out of reach. The fear created by violence serves ethnic interests and violence and also serves to undermine moderates who seek peaceful solutions. Political terrorists direct fear toward an external audience in the hopes of creating an illusion that the government's sociopolitical structure cannot work.[120] The Abu Sayyaf succeeded in capturing the world's attention by hostaging not just the people but also the government. During the five-month Sipadan hostage drama that started on 23 April 2000, it dictated terms to the Philippine government, and after the ransom was paid, the Abu Sayyaf contributed more to the local economy than any government program.[121]

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[117] Daniel Byman's. "Logic of Ethnic Terrorism" cited in Jonathan White, Terrorism: An Introduction (CA: Wadsworth Group, 2002), 187.

[118] Jonathan White, Terrorism: An Introduction (CA: Wadsworth Group, 2002), 187.

[119] Ressa, 104.

[120] White, 187.

[121] Ressa, 116.

2. Leadership

A typical contemporary terrorist infrastructure is centrifugal resembling a solar system: the leader is the sun, and the members are surrounding planets, usually within the range of his direct impact.[122] Zawondy mentions that in the hierarchical system, the leader is at the top while in the centrifugal system the leader is at the center. The leaders of terrorist movements, by virtue of being in the center of organizations, not only act as direct catalysts for actions, by planning and giving orders, but they are also participants in the actions.[123] On the other hand, Cragin and Daly's research shows that leadership is significantly more complex and argue that the leadership's role in maintaining group cohesion depends as much on the structure of the organization as it does on one leader's charisma.[124]

The emergence of Abu Sayyaf in the early 1990's represented the radicalization of the Muslim separatist movement headed by Abdurajak Janjalani, who was a veteran of the Afghan war. He fought with a mujahideen group under Abdul Rasul Abu Sayyaf.[125] When the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, Abdujarak returned to Basilan and established the Al Harakut al-Islamiya or the Islamic movement known as Abu Sayyaf with younger MNLF cadres opposed to MNLF's policy of negotiation.[126] Abdurajak Janjalani established the ASG as a breakaway faction of the Moro National Liberation Front, which was a nationalist insurgent group engaged in guerilla warfare against the Philippine

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[122] J.K. Zawondy, "Infrastructure of Terrorist Organizations," in <u>Perspectives on Terrorism</u>, eds. Lawrence Freedman and Yonah Alexander (Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1983), 63.

[123] Ibid., 63.

[124] Cragin and Daly, 34, argues that eliminating leaders can have a deleterious effect on terrorist groups such as the removal of Abiemael Guzman from Sendoro Lumisono (SL) or Shining Path in Peru and Abdullah Ocalan from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey. Other cases, such as the death of Hisballah leaders, have not had a disastrous effect on their respective groups. In both the Guzman and Ocalan cases, the structure of the organization was such that no clear succession plan existed, which is not the same for the Hizballah group.

[125] Angel M. Rabasa, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorists," *The Adelphin Papers, Oxford Journals,* 01 July 2003 <http://www3.oup.co.uk/adelph/hdb/volume/358/Issue011> (02 February 2004), 53.

[126] Ibid., 53.

government since the 1960's.[127]   By all accounts of charismatic personality, Abdujarak attracted to his movement young Muslims returning from Islamic studies in Saudi Arabia, Libya, Pakistan and Egypt, as well as local militants.[128] In comparison to the SL or Hizballah, the ASG has maintained a smaller membership, approximately 500 members at the height of its strength in the late 1990's.[129]   Between 1991 and 1998, the militant group began to expand and develop its capabilities, moving from a group able to conduct a small attack to successfully targeting foreign nationals. In the first years of the ASG campaign, the group mostly kidnapped local residents, and their level of capability was sustained because many of its members were drawn from the pools of disgruntled MNLF or MILF fighters.[130] In 1998, Abdurajak Janjalani died during a shootout with the military and police in Lamitan, Basilan, taking with him so much of the ideological glue of fundamentalism, which gave a political and moral cause to his group.[131]   Janjalani's death devastated the group as he had played a key role in maintaining the ASG's cohesion, strategy, and tactics.[132]   The leadership change splintered the ASG into as many as five distinct subgroups, each with a separate leadership agenda, and over the next few years, would become gangsters known for their viciousness and brutal beheadings.[133]   Like the MNLF, the ASG is also factionalized. Khadafi Janjalani, trained in Libya and brother of slain founder Abdurajak Janjalani, is heading the fundamentalist resistant movement in Basilan, and recently captured Galib Andang, alias

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[127] Kim Cragin and Peter Chalk, Terrorism and Development: Using Social and Economic Development to Inhibit a Resurgence of Terrorism (CA: RAND Corporation, 2003) cited in Kim Cragin and Sara Daly, The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World, (CA: RAND Project Air Force, 2004), 77.

[128] Rabasa, 54.

[129] Cragin and Daly, 77.

[130] Ibid., 78.

[131] Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press Simon and Schuster Inc., 2003), 109.

[132] Cragin and Daly, 79.

[133] Ressa, 109.

Commander Robot, used to head the faction operating in Jolo.[134] In addition to changes within the group's internal structure, external support to the ASG declined temporarily due to its uncertain future and increased focus on conducting largely criminal acts, such as taking hostages for ransom, which had little to do with the broader ideological aims of ASG's supporters.[135]

3. Recruitment

Terrorism is motivated by a range of real and perceived injustice that spans virtually every facet of human activity. The resulting grievances provide the basis for recruitment and the terrorists' justification for violence.[136] Recruitment pools are one of the most important requirements for terrorist groups' survivability. Groups need new members both to grow in strength and to replenish losses and defections.[137] According to Kurlantzick, in the Philippines, Japan, and other democratic Asian countries, terrorist have utilized the freedom given to nongovernmental organizations to set up front companies, usually "charities", that launder money, procure weapons, and recruit fighters.[138] Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, established IIRO (Islamic International Relief Organization) in the Philippines in 1988, ostensibly for charity and religious work but channeled money to extremist groups including Saudi MERC (Medical Emergency Relief Charity) International, Islamic Wisdom Worldwide Mission (IWWM), Daw'l Imman Al Shafec Center, and the International Relations and Information Center (IRIC).[139] Although most of the

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134 Rommel C. Banlaoi, "Globalization and Nation-Building in the Philippines: State Predicaments in Managing Society in the Midst of Diversity" in Growth and Governance in Asia, ed. Yoichiro Sato (Hawaii: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2004), 209.

135 Cragin and Daly, 79.

136 Public Report of the Vice President's Task Force on Combating Terrorism (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), 10.

137 Cragin and Daly, 10.

138 Joshua Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East: Terror Targets the Pacific Rim," The Washington Quarterly, Winter 2001 <http://www.twq.com/winter01/kurlantzick.pdf> (23 June 2004), 26.

139 Abuza, "Militant," 94.

money goes to legitimate charitable work, albeit to win political support, such as mosque construction, charities, cultural centers, and NGOs, a significant amount is diverted to terrorist and paramilitary activities.[140]

The original goal of Abu Sayyaf was an independent theocratic state in the southern Philippines, but unlike the MNLF and the MILF, the group saw its national objective as tied to a global effort to assert the dominance of Islam through armed struggle. Abdurajak had developed strong links to radicals in Afghanistan, including bin Laden and Khalifa, who helped established Abu Sayyaf.[141] Although, Osama bin Laden apparently remains al Qaedas' ideological and inspirational leader, the organization's affiliated groups still rely on their various leaders to maintain unity within al Qaeda, such as MILF and ASG who recruit members and conduct attacks without oversight from Al Qaeda.[142] According to Young, in June 2001, the Abu Sayyaf offered a high-powered rifle for a new recruit and 50,000 pesos ($1,000) in monthly pay to beef up its forces on Basilan Island.[143] The pay was taken from the ransom given by the freed hostages, and the allure of easy money and adventure is a powerful incentive in Basilan[144] and other depressed Muslim regions in Mindanao.[145] On 02 April

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[140] Ibid., 22.

[141] Rabasa, 53.

[142] Cragin and Daly, 33.

[143] Alexander Young, "Abu Sayyaf Offers 50,000 Pesos Monthly Pay to Recruits," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 June 2001, <http://www.inq7.net/archive/2001-p/nat/2001/june/15/nat_14-1-p.htm> 02 April 2004.

[144] Basilan, an island province in Western Mindanao, has a population of 330,000 as of year 2000. The majority are Muslims with Christians accounting for 35% of the population. The province is composed of six municipalities and a chartered city, all belonging to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. The governor of the province and its lone representative to Congress are Muslims. The province has a land area of about 13,272 sq. kms. of which 10,278 sq. kms. are alienable and disposable. The main source of livelihood is agriculture and fishing. Productivity is rather low and illiteracy is high. Unemployment and underemployment are also high. The incidence of poverty is higher than the national average, and economic development is slow. See Filler, "Abu Sayyaf." 138.

[145] Young, 1.

2004, Khadafi Janjalani, in an interview with the Inquirer, mentions that he had many volunteers willing to undergo training on use of explosives and explains that training had been going on since 2002.[146]

Moreover, San Juan argues that Abu Sayyaf is a splinter group born out of the U.S. war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and subsequently used by the Philippine government to sow discord among the more militant Islamic organizations.[147]   Protected by local politicians and military officials as well as local peasants, the Abu Sayyaf persistence betokens the complicated history of the struggle of Muslims in the Philippines for justice and self-determination dating back from the advent of the Spanish conquistadors in the mid-16th century.[148]   Moreover, Takeyh and Gvosdev explain that failed states create pools of recruits and supporters for terrorist groups, who can use their resources and organizations to step into the vacuum left by the collapse of official state power and civil society.[149]   Failed states provide the opportunity for terrorist organizations to acquire territory on a scale much larger than a collection of scattered safe houses, enough to accommodate entire training complexes, arm depots, and communications facilities.[150]   This has been the case of Abu Sayyaf and its nexus with MILF where they acquired de facto control over specified areas in Mindanao.   By playing on the widespread grievances on corruption, economic disparities and political repression, the ASG and even the MILF have discovered new recruits and used the rural and mountainous areas of Mindanao to create a safe haven for training recruits.   As Turner argues, "ASG members

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[146] Gil Cabacungan, Alcuin Papa, and Julie Alipala, "Government Taking Janjalani Seriously," *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* 02 April 2004, <http://www.inq7.net/nat/2004/apr/03/text/nat_4-1-p.htm> (02 April 2004).

[147] E. San Juan Jr., "Challenging the Theory and Practice of Contemporary American Studies," *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies,* 25, no. 4 (2003): 303.

[148] Ibid., 303.

[149] Ray Takeyh and Nicolas Gvosdev, "Do Terrorist Networks Need a Home?" *The Washington Quarterly,* Summer 2002, <http://www.twq.com/02summer/takeyh.pdf> (23 June 2004). 100.

[150] Ibid., 98.

are recruited from a restricted community determined by ethno-linguistic group and family where internal coordination is facilitated by trust." This makes the organization virtually impossible to penetrate by government agents.[151]

4. ASG's Use of Media

The ASG has effectively used the media and other modern communications technology to project themselves and their terror into civil society's consciousness.[152] The Abu Sayyaf saw the media's role in conveying their messages worldwide as essential to achieving their goals. They knew that their acts were newsworthy. According to Debatin, "the terrorist outrages have been planned and timed so as to exploit the media to its absolute limits and to attract maximum publicity."[153] Terrorists show no hesitation or lack of skill in exploiting the benefits of democracy.[154] On the other hand, San Juan mentions that the Abu Sayyaf bandit group of less than 100 men has been elevated to incredible prominence by the U.S. media.[155] Likewise, Pekka Mykannen mentions that media is very responsible for letting Abu Sayyaf understand what kind of money there is in Western countries.[156] Foreign journalists paid significant sums for access to the terrorists that hindered both the release of the terrorists and the process of negotiations.[157] The Abu Sayyaf charged journalists access to the camps including interviews with them and the hostages. Other journalists paid $500 to $1,000, but on 03 June 2000, 10 western journalists paid

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[151] Mark Turner, "The Management of Violence in a Conflict Organization: The Case of the Abu Sayyaf," *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*, no. 3 (2003): 397.

[152] Alfredo Filler, "The Abu Sayyaf Group: A Growing Menace to Civil Society," Terrorism and Political Violence 14, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 140.

[153] Bernhard Debatin, "Plane Wreck with Spectators: Terrorism and Media Attention" in Communication and Terrorism: Public and Media Response to 9/11, ed. Bradley Greenberg (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2003), 164.

[154] Ibid., 164.

[155] E. San Juan Jr., "Challenging the Theory and Practice of Contemporary American Studies," *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies,* 25, no. 4 (2003): 303.

[156] Norwegian journalist Pekka Mykannen studied the workings of the press under crisis situation for his master's degree. He agreed to be interviewed by Maria Ressa at Zamboanga, the jumping-off point for journalist covering the hostage crisis in Basilan. See, Ressa, "Seeds of Terror," 113.

[157] Ressa, "Seeds of Terror," 113.

$25,000 to Abu Sayyaf. As Pekka mentions, "media was basically arming them and making them stronger in order to get very important information about the condition of the hostages."[158] As a result of the publicity, Abu Sayyaf was able to get their messages out to various audiences: the ASG supporters, military and police, Muslim supporters, local and international observers. Likewise, family members of the hostages turned to the media who then brought pressure on the Philippine government to take action that may not be appropriate or possible. Lastly, the media was also able to portray ASG's asymmetrical warfare of irrational barbarism and profits from ransom. However, the real dangers, according to Debatin, "lies in the possibility that the media – known for their incorruptible search for the truth and their critical approach to government action – may find themselves in a situation where lines are blurred between coverage and propaganda."[159]

C.   OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

1.   Command and Control

Command and control is the mechanism that terrorist groups use to plan, coordinate, and execute their attacks.[160] The terrorist groups not only sustain the activities of their command and control network but also protect it from infiltration.[161] Ressa mentions that one of the nine jungle network camps of ASG is Camp Abdurajak, the central base camp about 20x40 miles and so well hidden that Red Cross workers who have been to the base camp say it is virtually impenetrable.[162] It would eventually be overrun by troops, but in those early days, the Abu Sayyaf was confident of its position, and some of their demands became preposterous.[163] Said ASG camps were reportedly a major planning hub for their missions. Moreover, radical Islamic Filipinos returning from training

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[158] Ibid., 115.

[159] Debatin, 174.

[160] Cragin and Daly, 40.

[161] Ibid., 40.

[162] Ressa, 110.

[163] Ibid., 110.

camps in Afghanistan in the early 1990's had little difficulty infiltrating the Southern Philippines. Abu Sayyaf has well-established ties with Al Qaeda and has constructed training camps in the southern Philippines modeled on the Al Qaeda setup in Afghanistan.[164] The Abu Sayyaf's command and control requirement in the early 1990's were minimal. The group relied on couriers or runners to coordinate operations. However, as Desker mentions, ASG is flush with ransom money with which to purchase new weapons and equipment, such as state-of-the-art speedboats and advanced communication devices.[165] Abu Sayyaf had better command and control equipment resulting from its many lucrative kidnapping operations. An example pertains to Libya's $20 million payment to secure the release of hostages in 2000. Vitug and Gloria contends that ASG rebels-turned-bandits have become power centers of their own network of informants that extend to the Sulu and Basilan islands, keep their own money-making schemes such as kidnapping, and get away with them due to their dalliances with corrupt police and military men.[166] Thus, ASG was able to operate and plan attacks with little concern for their own security. They likewise meticulously plan their attacks in order to make a big impact.

2. Weapons and Logistics

In late September 2001, the Philippine military's Chief of Staff confirmed speculation that an Al-Qaeda was seeking to support the Abu Sayyaf with material, leadership, and training support.[167] As a transnational terrorist organization, Al Qaeda has sought to expand beyond the traditional venue of the Middle East, Western Europe, North America, and South Asia. Increasingly, the

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[164] Barry Desker and Kumar Ramakrishna, "Forging an Indirect Strategy in Southeast Asia," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2002, <http://www.twq.com/02spring/desjer.pdf> (23 June 2004), 165. See also, Edwin Rueda, "New Terrorism? A Case Study of Al-Qaeda and the Lebanese Hezbollah," Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, December 2001, <http://www.nps.edu> (26 May 2004), 31.

[165] Desker and Ramakrishna, "Forging," 165.

[166] Marites Danguilan Vitug and Glenda Gloria, Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao (Quezon City: Ateneo University Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs, 2000), 196.

organization has pursued Southeast Asia as a key basing and staging region. Al Qaeda has long cultivated links with groups such as the Abu Sayyaf, MILF, and Indonesian group Laskar Jihad.[168] As in the Southern Philippines, Al Qaeda has developed the ability to merge with the religious, social, and economic life of the Muslim communities.   Bin Laden clearly saw the potential of a jihad in the southern Philippines, and in 1998, sent his brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, to establish several Islamic charities and to channel funding to Muslim insurgents and terrorist cells.[169] The Islamic International Relief Organization (IIRO) was used by bin Laden and Khalifa to distribute funds for the purchase of arms and other logistical requirements of the Abu Sayyaf and MILF, and only 30 percent goes to legitimate relief and livelihood projects and the rest go to terrorist operations.[170] Accordingly, bin Laden and Khalifa financed the urban warfare and terrorism training in both Libya and in the Philippines of recruits to the Abu Sayyaf, dating back to 1991, when the group was founded.[171]   In addition to facilitating its own record of domestic-based terrorism, which has included bombings, assassinations, international kidnappings and civilian massacres, such as the 1995 Ipil attack, which left 54 Christians dead, the ASG has used its foreign contacts to help with the creation of local logistics for international Islamic organizations wishing to operate in the Philippines.[172] Concrete evidence of these transnational ties first emerged in 1995 when the ASG was linked to a multi-pronged plot to bomb Washington's embassies in Manila and Bangkok, assassinate President Clinton during the 1996 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit meeting in Subic Bay and destroy U.S.

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[167] Paul Smith, "Transnational Terrorism and the Al Qaeda Model: Confronting New Realities," *Parameters, U.S. Army War College Quarterly*, Summer 2002, <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/parameters/02summer/smith.htm> (23 June 2004), 4.

[168] Ibid., 4.

[169] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 91-92.

[170] Ibid., 93.

[171] Ibid., 93-94.

[172] Tan and Ramakrishna, "The New Terrorism," 113.

airlines flying trans-Pacific routes from American west coast cities (Operation Bojinka).[173] Ramzi Yousef developed the plan, the convicted mastermind of the 1993 attack against the World Trade Centre in New York, who had been dispatched to the Philippines as a personal emissary of Bin Laden to establish a tactical working relationship with the ASG.[174]

Furthermore, the Abu Sayyaf received millions of pesos from foreign sources including contributions from Saudi and Pakistani Islamic groups.[175] Libya has played a role of in the negotiations for the release of the ASG's foreign hostages. In 1991, the ASG received some $6 million, mainly from Al Qaeda and Libya, including deliveries of Libyan model weapons from Victor Blout, the Tajik arms dealer later linked to both the Taliban regime and Al Qaida.[176] Saif Al-Islam Al-Ghadaffi, the son of the Libyan leader, met with rebel leaders in Maguindanao on 13 December 1999 and reintegrated Libya's commitment in the economic development in Mindanao.[177] Aside from kidnappings, other ASG revenues are derived from taxation, extortion or smuggling. There is little evidence that the group receives voluntary contributions from individuals, NGOs, or commercial companies.[178]

3.   Environment and Training

The environment plays an important factor in the operation of an organization. According to Turner, "environment comprised of forces, other organizations and individuals with which the organization interacts or which affect its operation."[179] The terrorist groups, aside from command and control

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[173] Ibid., 113.

[174] Ibid., 114.

[175] Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment Southeast Asia, "Security and Foreign Forces, Philippines", 08 October 2003 <http://www4.janes.com/k2/doc.jsp> (01 November 2003), 7.

[176] Donald McNeil, Jr., "Belgium Seeks Arms Deals with Suspected Qaeda Ties," New York Times, 27 February 2002 cited in Abuza, "Militant Islam," 101.

[177] Jane's "Security and Foreign Forces, Philippines," 7.

[178] Ibid., 8.

[179] Mark Turner, "The Management of Violence in a Conflict Organization: The Case of the Abu Sayyaf," *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*, no. 3 (2003): 390.

networks and weapons, need the environment as their operational space to plan, train for, and execute their attack. These will range from urban neighborhoods to state sanctuaries, or active and passive support of communities, local, national, and transnational.[180]   Also, history is an environmental factor that provides one of the fundamental explanations for the Abu Sayyaf's capacity to survive, and at times even thrive, despite the efforts of the state to erase it.[181] The Abu Sayyaf can be seen as part of a broader movement of Muslim peoples spanning several centuries, which refuses to acknowledge the authority of the Philippine state, whether independent or colonial.[182] Turner further argues that the historical context of Abu Sayyaf's environment helps explain ASG's survival:[183] 1) the Abu Sayyaf tap into the longstanding Muslim rejection of state authority, whether the Spanish, Americans or the republic. Many Moros view their history as four centuries of struggles to defend their fundamental right to self determination; 2) the colonial powers succeeded in creating and embedding a transcendent Muslim (Moro) identity. While the component ethno-linguistic groups maintain their identities as Tausog, Maranao, Maguindanao or other, they have come to share the overarching classification of Moro; 3) a feeling of dispossession where land has been alienated, development has by-passed the majority of them and their identity has been under sustained attack. Such reflection on history breeds resentment and support.

Smith mentions that Al Qaeda has flourished in an environment of weak or quasi-states, which are undergoing disruptive political or social change. Such areas are not only hospitable to terrorists but also attract transnational crime groups, drug traffickers, and maritime pirates.[184] This is also the case for Abu

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[180] Cragin and Daly, 45.

[181] Turner, "Management of Violence," 390.

[182] Ibid., 390.

[183] Ibid., 392.

[184] Paul Smith, "Transnational Terrorism and the Al Qaeda Model: Confronting New Realities," *Parameters, US Army War College Quarterly*, Summer 2002, <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/parameters/02summer/smith.htm> (23 June 2004), 4.

Sayyaf where government control of Basilan and Sulu has been limited. Gates, who also examines the micro foundations of rebellion, contends that recruitment of rebels is an understanding of those who faced dismal conditions at home due to poverty or boredom.[185] Similarly, Tan argues that the roots of Muslim rage and alienation lie fundamentally in local political, economic and social issues and conflicts, whether in Kashmir, Chechnya, Aceh, Patani or Mindanao, or even in Western Europe.[186] In Southeast Asia, all three separatist rebellions in Aceh, Patani and Mindanao, "predated September 11 and Al Qaeda, and have been driven by the presence of local grievances such as continuing poverty, unemployment and military abuses in Aceh, and Muslim Moro landlessness in Mindanao."[187]

Terrorism will be problematic as long as people are disaffected, and recent history demonstrates that relatively weak and isolated insurgencies form Kosovo to the Southern Philippines became much more deadly and effective once they drew upon an international network for a continuous supply of recruits, funds, and equipment.[188] This is one of the most difficult problems faced by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), that boundaries between the Abu Sayyaf organization and its environment are very blurred.[189] Movement across the boundaries is easy for Abu Sayyaf members. They can seek refuge in MILF-controlled areas, as the AFP is not officially engaged in hostilities with that organization. They can return to the anonymity of village life or slip over the

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185 Scott Gates, "Recruitment and Allegiance: The Microfoundations of Rebellion," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 46 no. 1 (2002): 128.

186 Kumar Ramakrishna and Andrew Tan, "The New Terrorism: Diagnosis and Prescriptions in The New Terrorism: Anatomy, Trends and Counter- Strategies eds. Andrew Tan and Kumar Ramakrishna (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2002), 20.

187 Ibid., 20.

188 Ray Takeyh and Nicolas Gvosdev, "Do Terrorist Networks Need a Home?" *The Washington Quarterly,* Summer 2002, <http://www.twq.com/02summer/takeyh.pdf> (23 June 2004). 106.

189 Mark Turner, "The Management of Violence in a Conflict Organization: The Case of the Abu Sayyaf," *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*, no. 3 (2003): 398.

Basilan Strait to the large city of Zamboanga.[190] This collusion between ASG and MILF has been confirmed at a congressional hearing by former hostages Sheila Tabunag and Reina Malonzo, both working as midwife and nurse respectively at Don Jose Torres Memorial Hospital in Lamitan, Basilan, when ASG took them to MILF camps sometime in the last quarter of 2001.[191] Lastly, the key to Abu Sayyaf's survival has been its ability to adapt to its environment. It exists in a context where resistance to the state is deeply embedded and where the state is weak in places where ASG operates.[192] As Ressa mentions, Abu Sayyaf is also a product of its environment, and ideologues such as Janjalani are rare when the daily fight is to put food on the table. The two provinces that are home to Abu Sayyaf, Basilan and Sulu, are predominantly Muslim and among the poorest in the nation.[193]

The origins of the Abu Sayyaf can also be traced to Afghanistan, and in the early 1980's, between 300 and 500 Moro fundamentalist arrived in Peshawar, Pakistan, to serve with the Mujahidin.[194] One of them, Ustadz Abdurajak Janjalani, emerged as their leader, who attended Islamic universities in Libya and Saudi Arabia before joining the mujahidin and fighting the Soviets for several years.[195] According to International Crisis Group (ICG) Asia Report, the MILF's ties to Al Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiyah, and other jihadist groups were forged in Afghan training camps in the mid-1980's, and there is an effort to replicate the Afghan experience in Mindanao that now present perhaps the gravest threat to

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[190] Ibid., 398.

[191] Cynthia Balana and Julie Alipala, "Link Between Abu Sayyaf and MILF Confirmed, Says Senator," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 09 March 2002, <http://www.inq7.net/nat/2002/mar/09/txt/nat_3-1-P.htm> (02 April 2004).

[192] Turner, "Management of Violence," 399.

[193] Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press Simon and Schuster Inc., 2003), 26.

[194] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 99.

[195] Ibid., 99-100.

the peace process.[196]   Persistent reports of links between the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the regional Jemaah islamiyah (JI) network, and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) overshadow the negotiations between the MILF and Philippine government in Kuala Lumpur and underscore the growing entanglement of deeply rooted domestic insurgencies with the global "war on terrorism".[197]

Ramzi Yousef [198] had been training members of the Abu Sayyaf from the birth of the group.   In 1991, when Yousef came to Basilan with Abdurajak Janjalani to form the fledging group, Janjalani spoke eloquently at the mosques, enticing younger Filipinos to find Islam's true meaning.[199] Also, on 23 February 1992, bin Laden's brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa met with ASG leaders in General Santos City and convinced them to create the Urban Guerilla Squad (UGS) to launch terrorist attacks in Zamboanga City.[200] It resulted in the killing of five people and 40 others wounded when ASG threw a grenade at Fort Pilar on 28 August 1992.   Later, other Al Qaeda operatives would help in the training of the Abu Sayyaf.   In 1995, Islamic radicals from Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Bosnia, and Yemen would be among those who came to the jungle camps to train Abu Sayyaf members.[201] The Egyptian Al Bakre, arrested in Maguindanao on 02 June 2004, was a bomb instructor at the MILF's Camp Omar in Datu Piang,

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[196] International Crisis Group (ICG) Asia Report, "Southern Philippines Backgrounder: Terrorism and the Peace Process," 13 July 2004, <http://www.icg.org> (21 July 2004), 13.

[197] Ibid., 2.

[198] Yousef, the convicted mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing on 26 February 1993, is the son of a Pakistani mother and a Palestinian father. He speaks Urdu, Arabic, and English, and he studied engineering at Swansea University in Wales from 1986 to 1989. He then went to Afghanistan to be trained in guerilla fighting at the camps of Osama bin Laden. In 1991, he moved to the Philippines and joined Abu Sayyaf. After the 1993 WTC bombing, he returned to the Philippines, where he became involved in another plot: to kill Pope John Paul II when he visited Manila and Oplan Bojinka (Code for big bang – Al Qaeda's imaginative plot at that time) that calls for the bombing of 11 U.S. jetliners. See, Steve Emerson, American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among US (NY: Free Press, 2002), 53.

[199] Ressa, 26.

[200] Ibid., 27.

[201] Ibid., 27.

Maguindano.[202] In 2000, he trained MILF and Jemaah Islmaiyah (JI) members in demolitions, explosives, and the manufacturing of rocket-propelled grenades inside Camp Abubakar and other MILF camps.[203] The Abubakar and Omar camps were overrun by the military in 2000, but as part of the continuing peace talks between the government and the Muslim rebels, a portion of Camp Omar was returned to the MILF as temporary quarters.[204] ICG argues that JI's training program in Mindanao was crucial in producing a new generation of operatives capable of filling the shoes of Afghan veterans, increasingly depleted by post-Bali arrests in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.[205] There is growing evidence that Camp Hudaibiyah alumni have used their training not only to revitalize JI ranks in Indonesia, but also to carry out terror attacks in the Philippines itself and breathe new life into the Abu Sayyaf Group.[206]

D.   INTERNATIONAL LINKS

The Al Qaeda was able to establish strong terrorist links in the Philippines through the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.[207] The Philippines served as a major planning hub for Al Qaeda missions worldwide and a regional hub for financing radical Islamic organizations.[208] Khalifa established local branches of the Saudi-based International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), which channeled funds to both the Abu Sayyaf and Al Qaeda cells in the country.[209]

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[202] Alcuin Papa, "Military: Al Qaeda Man Says He Trained MILF Bombers," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 03 June 2004, <http://www.inq7.net/nat/2004/jun/04/nat_4-1.htm> (03 June 2004).

[203] Ibid., 1.

[204] Ibid., 2.

[205] International Crisis Group (ICG) Asia Report, 17.

[206] Ibid., 17.

[207] Rommel Banlaoi, The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia (Quezon City: Strategic and Integrative Studies Center, 2003), 28.

[208] Barry Desker and Kumar Ramakrishna, "Forging an Indirect Strategy in Southeast Asia," The Washington Quarterly, Spring 2002 <http://www.twq.com/02spring/desker.pdf> (23 June 2004), 165.

[209] Ibid., 165.

The 2001 trial of Madji Hasan Idris, an Egyptian member of the radical Al Wa'd organization, revealed the extent terrorist network. Al Wa'd would send young Egyptian recruits to camps in Kosovo or Pakistan and then dispatch them to serve in the Philippines, Kashmir, or wherever else they were needed after their training and indoctrination were complete.[210] As Takeyh argues, Al Qaeda and the symbolic organized-crime networks sustaining terrorist organizations are not confined territorially or ideologically to a particular region but instead are global in orientation.[211] The network in Al Qaeda set up in Southeast Asia is not just its new center of training and operations; it is also a model for other regions such as Chechnya and East Africa where autonomous Islamic areas can be linked together worldwide.[212]

Al Qaeda, literally the "Base", operates both on its own and through an interlocking complex of overseas terrorist organizations and cells that links extremists in at least 40 countries.[213] Among the constituent groups in the network are bin Laden's own Al Qaeda, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in Algeria, the Harakat al Mujahadin that is based in Pakistan and operates partially in Kashmir, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines.[214] Al Qaeda, EIJ, and GIA cells have been found in numerous countries in Europe, Africa, and the Islamic world.[215] Al Qaeda operatives have been seeking safer waters in Southeast Asia, a region notorious for its porous borders, large populations of urban and rural poor, and

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[210] Ray Takeyh and Nicolas Gvosdev, "Do Terrorist Networks Need a Home?" *The Washington Quarterly,* Summer 2002 <http://www.twq.com/02summer/takeyh.pdf> (23 June 2004). 97.

[211] Ibid., 97.

[212] Ressa, 12.

[213] Peter Chalk, "Al Qaeda and Its Links to Terrorist Groups in Asia," in The New Terrorism: Anatomy, Trends and Counter-Strategies eds. Andrew Tan and Kumar Ramakrishna (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2002), 108.

[214] Kurt Campbell and Michelle Flournoy, To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2001), 41.

[215] Ibid., 42.

both Muslim and non-Muslim armed extremists groups.[216]   The U.S. State Department named the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia as "potential Al Qaeda hubs".[217]   The U.S. Department of State currently designates the Abu Sayyaf Group as one of the 28 Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTD').[218]

Jones, Smith, and Weeding argue that the roots of the Southeast Asian terror network, JI and its deepening relationship with Al Qaeda can be traced to two geographically separate ethno-religious struggles in the Philippines and Indonesia.[219]   They further argue that the struggles of the two country's rebel/guerilla groups were eventually combined through the auspices of Al Qaeda and the global franchising opportunities it exploited from the early 1990's.[220] Hoffman also argues that bin Laden's "revolutionary philanthropy", arms, training, and material assistance to Islamic groups as part of furthering the global jihad, is meant to facilitate a quid pro quo situation where Al Qaeda operatives can call on the logistical services and manpower resources provided locally by insurgent forces in Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Chechnya, the Philippines, Bosnia, Kashmir, etc..[221]   However, Turner contends that while Abu Sayyaf appears to have international linkages through which it has acquired resources and training, there are questions of how much and how regularly.   If the resource flow has been plentiful then why has the Abu Sayyaf perpetrated so many kidnappings for ransom?[222]   Turner further asks the question of whether

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[216] Barry Desker and Kumar Ramakrishna, "Forging an Indirect Strategy in Southeast Asia," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2002 <http://www.twq.com/02spring/desjer.pdf> (23 June 2004), 162.

[217] Ibid., 162.

[218] U.S. Department of State, "2001 Report on Foreign Terrorist Organizations," 05 October 2001, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rpt/fto/2001/5258pf.htm> (29 February 2004).

[219] David Martin Jones, Michael Smith and Mark Weeding, "Looking for the Pattern: Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia- The Genealogy of a Terror Network," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 26 (2003): 443.

[220] Ibid., 443.

[221] Bruce Hoffman, "Testimony: Lessons of 9/11," Submitted for the Committee Record to the United States Joint September 11, 2001 Inquiry Staff of the House and Senate Select Committees on Intelligence on October 8, 2002, (October 2002): 15.

[222] Turner, 395.

international terrorists wanted close association with the Abu Sayyaf when their activities have been regularly condemned by other Philippine Muslim organizations as "un-Islamic." It is doubtful whether Abu Sayyaf members ever considered being oriented to international goals derived from alien sources.[223] As McKenna mentions, the reasons for becoming an armed separatist also include "self defense, revenge, plunder, defense of local communities, armed coercion, and personal ambition."[224]

Moreover, the post-Soviet era has also witnessed the rise of Afghan Arabs, a loose grouping of Islamists who fought together against the Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980's.[225] The thousands of Muslim volunteers who flocked to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets have attempted to sustain the momentum of that victory by lending their strategic support and firepower to national and religious disputes around the world.[226] The mujahaddin war against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan had a galvanizing effect, and those Southeast Asian Muslims, who received training in weapons and explosives, were indoctrinated in militant jihadist worldview and became part of an international clandestine network of alumni from that victorious struggle.[227] With the war over, many returned to Southeast Asia ripe for recruitment into local terrorist organizations dedicated to the destruction of non-Muslim communities, Western influence, and secular governments.[228] As Ressa explains, the call to jihad against the Soviets in Afghanistan was highly appealing in Southeast Asia. In the Philippines, more

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[223] Ibid., 396.

[224] Thomas McKeena, <u>Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separation in the Southern Philippines</u> (CA: University of California Press, 1998), 286; cited in Turner, 396.

[225] Joshua Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East: Terror Targets the Pacific Rim," *The Washington Quarterly,* Winter 2001, <http://www.twq.com/winter01/kurlantzick.pdf> (23 June 2004), 24.

[226] Reuven Paz, Director at the International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism, cited in Joshua Kurlantzick, "Fear Moves East: Terror Targets the Pacific Rim," *The Washington Quarterly,* Winter 2001, <http://www.twq.com/winter01/kurlantzick.pdf> (23 June 2004), 24.

[227] Wilson Lee and Robert Hathaway, "U.S. Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region," *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Asia Program,* 5 May 2003, <http://www.ics.si.edu/topics/pubs/asiapacific_rpt_final.pdf> (23 June 2003), 58.

[228] Ibid., 58.

than 1,000 Muslims made the trip, and when they returned home, they brought back the radical ideas and terrorist techniques learned from the camps in Afghanistan.[229] Abu Sayyaf's jihad was imported from Al Qaeda, and Janjalani would name his group, Abu Sayyaf, after the Pushtun warlord, Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a legendary Afghan mujahideen and founder of the Afghan Islamic movement.[230] As a result, Southeast Asia emerged in the 1990's as an important sanctuary for Al Qaeda, rather than a theater of operations.[231] When Al Qaeda sought to establish a local affiliate in 1993-1994, it was able to turn to veterans of the anti-Soviet mujahideen in Afghanistan. Southeast Asian veterans of Afghanistan became leaders of most every militant group in Southeast Asia, including Jemaah Islamiyah, the Kampulan Mujahideen (Malaysia), the Laskar Jihad (Indonesia), Guragon Mujahideen and Wae Kah Rah (Southern Thailand), and MILF/Abu Sayyaf (Philippines).[232]

Initially, the Philippine government denied any strong connection between the Philippine local terrorist movements (particularly the Abu Sayyaf) and Al Qaeda.[233] During the Estrada presidency, Abu Sayyaf was identified as a mere criminal group. However, President Arroyo and the U.S. Department of State declared the Abu Sayyaf a terrorist group with links to Al Qaeda. As Keohane mentions, "the government of the Philippines has even invited American military advisers to help it defeat an Islamic guerilla movement allegedly linked to Al Qaeda."[234] Alternatively, after 9/11, the United States literally ordered a number of countries like Pakistan, Indonesia, and the Philippines to deal with their own

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[229] Ressa, 12.

[230] Ibid., 107.

[231] Zachary Abuza, "Learning by Doing: Al Qaeda's Allies in Southeast Asia," *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs* (April 2004): 172.

[232] Ibid., 172.

[233] Banlaoi, 28.

[234] Robert O. Keohane, "The Public Delegitimation of Terrorism and Coalition Politics" in World in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 144.

fundamentalists.[235]   Thus, the international links of the Abu Sayyaf with Al Qaeda and its nexus with MILF and JI, the Philippines' porous and poorly controlled borders, the weakness in intelligence and law-enforcement institutions, including the political reluctance to admit the gravity of the threat are the counterterrorism challenges being faced by the Philippine government.

E.   CONCLUSION

The Abu Sayyaf is changing its tactics and renewing its links with other extremists group, as Al Qaeda has increasingly sought to expand its key basing and staging region at Southeast Asia. Al Qaeda's complicated linkages with groups such as Abu Sayyaf, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and Laskar Jihad, and the region-wide Jemaah Islamiyah has emerged as a challenge in Asia's war on terror. The anarchic region of Central Mindanao has become a training base for the Southeast Asian terror organizations and a refuge for Abu Sayyaf. It has also become a breeding ground for new terror groups or new core of Abu Sayyaf extremists.

Despite the Philippine government's success against ASG terrorists, Abu Sabaya, Nasser Hapilon, Hamsiraji Sali, Alzhezar Salappudin Jila, Hamid Abdulbasar, Jumadil Abdulhan, Julipikar Abdulbassar and Commander Robot, comprehensive strategy is necessary in winning the hearts and minds by addressing the fundamental political, economic and social grievances in Muslim Mindanao.

Even if the Armed Forces of the Philippines decimate the Abu Sayyaf, the unchanged conditions of the Muslim populace, injustice, inequality and poverty will continue to breed terrorism and rebellion.

The government should not ignore Al Qaeda's international reach and lingering presence in the Philippines. Instead of pursuing a predominantly military approach in wiping out Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist organizations, a

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[235] Michael Cox, "Meanings of Victory: American Power after the Towers," in World in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 155.

comprehensive political, economic, ideological measures, and carefully calibrated military power should be adopted to counter the terrorists' organizational and operational tools.

As Maria Ressa mentions, "it has become difficult to address the root problems, as it starts with the internal rivalries among the individuals involved, aggravated by politics of the organizations they represent, the institutions they belong to, and the leaders they report to."[236] She further explains that self-interest at every level has obscured and twisted every step of the global war on terror, and these are the cracks terrorists continue to exploit.[237]

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[236] Maria Ressa, Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia (New York: Free Press Simon and Schuster Inc., 2003), 26.

[237] Ibid., 123.

IV. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO TERRORISM

A.   INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is a global problem, and no country, region, or people are completely immune from terrorist violence.[238] Terrorism has become a central and controversial issue of global attention.   Within the past 30 years, the Philippines have experienced different forms of terrorism.   One was on April 7, 1976 when three Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) members hijacked a Philippine Airlines BAC-111 jetliner from Southern Philippines and ordered it flown to Libya.[239]   In the succeeding years, the Philippines has been beset by terrorist attacks from MNLF, and the New Peoples Army.   According to Chalk, "between 1990 to 1995, the Philippines have experienced the most terrorist violence in Southeast Asian context with 1,030 attacks, yielding a six-year annual average of 171 incidents."[240] Accordingly in 1996, a significant 64 incidents were added with 1,900 people killed since 1990 making the country one of the most severely affected regions in the world in terms of terrorist violence.[241] Historically, most of the political violence was executed by MNLF, who in 1996, signed a peace accord with the Philippine government.   However, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a breakaway faction of the MNLF, and the Abu Sayyaf, were the most extreme and dangerous terrorist groups that continue to foment violence in the country.

Professor Christoffersen mentions, "Abu Sayyaf claims it fight for an Islamic State but is better known for criminal activities and hostage taking."[242]

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238 L. Paul Bremer III, "The West's Counterterrorist Strategy" in <u>Western Response to Terrorism</u>, eds. Alex Schmid and Ronald Crelinsten (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1993), 255.

239 Lester Sobel, <u>Political Terrorism Volume 2</u> (NY: Facts on File, Inc., 1978), 235.

240 Peter Chalk, <u>Grey-Area Phenomena in Southeast Asia: Piracy, Drug Trafficking and Political Terrorism</u> (Canberra: Australian National University, 1997), 69.

241 Ibid., 69.

242 Gaye Christoffersen, "The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Searching for Partners, Delimiting Targets," <u>Strategic Insights, Center for Contemporary Conflict, Naval Postgraduate School</u>. (2002): 1.

Unlike the MILF and MNLF, which the government believes to be legitimate organizations with real grievances, it labeled the Abu Sayyaf as group of terrorists and bandits and has shown absolutely no willingness to negotiate a political settlement.[243] Abuza also explains that the Philippines is the nexus between Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. JI's continuing ability to regroup and train a new generation of members is inextricably linked to the difficult peace process in the southern Philippines.[244] Abuza further contends that the Philippine armed forces failed to maintain the momentum generated by the Balikatan exercises in the second half of 2002, and with only 250 to 500 ASG fighters in 2003, the Philippine government was unable to defeat them.[245] However, Smith mentions, "government policies in response to terrorism extend beyond courses of action, to include resources and capabilities available in the pursuit of its policies."[246] The means (or 'tools', e.g., police, legislation, equipment) and methods (use of tools) must be identified together with an assessment of their utility and effectiveness.[247] While the solutions to the terrorist threat are complex and not easily devised, terrorism is absolutely intolerable, and it is imperative that governments that have been targeted for terrorist strikes mobilized their law enforcement, national security, and civil preparedness machinery to respond to such crises effectively.[248]

This chapter argues that the Philippine government still lacks the capacity to respond well to the threats posed by terrorism. The Philippines' response to terrorism remains ad hoc and reactive rather than decisive and strategic.

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[243] Zachary Abuza, <u>Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror</u> (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 207.

[244] Zachary Abuza, "Learning by Doing: Al Qaeda's Allies in Southeast Asia," <u>Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs</u> (2004): 173.

[245] Zachary Abuza, <u>Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror</u> (Colorado: Lyne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 205-207.

[246] G. Davidson Smith, <u>Combatting Terrorism</u> (NY: Routledge, 1990), 143.

[247] Ibid., 143.

[248] Richard Schultz, "The State of the Operational Art: A Critical Review of Anti-terrorist Programs," in <u>Responding to the Terrorist Threat: Security and Crisis Management,</u> eds. Richard Shultz and Stephen Sloan (NY: Pergamon Press, 1980), 19.

Despite the initial success of the joint Philippines and U.S. operations against Abu Sayyaf, the government failed to maintain the momentum generated by the success of "Balikatan 02-1" due to a lack of unifying strategy.

Moreover, this chapter critically examines the joint Philippine and U.S. counterterrorism responses against the Abu Sayyaf. This chapter focuses on the Philippine government capabilities, the needed institutional change, and the weakness of the bureaucracy in its response to terrorism. This chapter also examines the importance of legislation in the aspect of countering terrorism.

B.   JOINT PHILIPPINE AND U.S. RESPONSES AGAINST ABU SAYYAF

The Philippines gave the strongest response to U.S. appeals for assistance in the war on terrorism. Soon after 9/11, President Macapagal Arroyo saw the war on terrorism as an opportunity to engage the Unites States in the government's military campaign against Abu Sayyaf.[249] As Abuza mentions, "Arroyo saw nothing but opportunity out of the crisis, and she made the most of it."[250] President Arroyo, saddled with the problem of terrorism in Mindanao and the outlying Sulu Archipelago, immediately rallied her government behind President Bush's call for a global coalition against terrorism. She supported the United States on the war in Iraq and authorized a small military contingent for humanitarian and civic mission to help the U.S.-led coalition in restoring order, after the ouster of the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

In late 2001, Manila allowed U.S. forces to over fly Philippine airspace and use airfields as transit points in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The United States in turn, provided anti-terrorism training and advice, and deployed military personnel, including 160 U.S. Army Special Forces troops, to Zamboanga in Mindanao and on Basilan.[251] Given the Philippines'

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[249] Angel Rabasa, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorists," *The Adelphi Papers, Oxford Journals,* 01 July 2003 http://www3.oup.co.uk/adelph/hdb/volume_358/Issue_011 (02 Feb 2004), 54.

[250] Zachary Abuza, <u>Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: The Crucible of Terror</u> (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 202.

predominantly Catholic population, Arroyo's position did not expose the government to the same pressures as its counterparts in Indonesia and Malaysia. Accordingly, the presence of U.S. forces is a sensitive issue, and the decision to accept American trainers was a major political gamble.[252]   However, Elshtain explains that "U.S. thoughtful response is within the restrains of just war, and many governments including the Philippines are seeking U.S. assistance in their fight against indigenous terrorist organization."[253]

The United States became steadily embroiled in the Philippines, culminating in the deployment of 1,300 troops, including 160 special operations forces.[254]   In late January 2002, some 660 U.S. forces were deployed to Basilan to train Philippine troops and to provide operational assistance, intelligence gathering, and air support.   Special Forces numbering 150 would perform training and advisory functions; and some of these would accompany AFP unity in Basilan.[255]   Due to the Philippine Constitution, which forbids foreign forces fighting in the Philippines, the joint operation was called "Balikatan" 02-1 (shoulder to shoulder) Training Exercise. Under the "Terms of Reference," the legal document that governed the U.S. role in the Philippines, the Americans were not allowed to be directly involved in combat operations, but they could join front line troops to advise them and fight back in self-defense.[256]   There was a great deal of confusion in Filipino public opinion regarding both their missions

[251] Angel Rabasa, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorists," *The Adelphi Papers, Oxford Journals,* 01 July 2003 <http://www3.oup.co.uk/adelph/hdb/volume_358/Issue_011> (February 2004), 54.

[252] Ibid., 54.

[253] Jean Bethe Elshtain, Just War Against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World (NY: Basic Books, 2003), 148.

[254] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: The Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 204.

[255] Larry Niksch, "Abu Sayyaf: Target of Philippine-U.S. Anti-Terrorism Cooperation" in World Terrorism ed. Edward Linden (NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2002), 57.

[256] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: The Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 204.

and whether they violated the constitution.[257]   Professor Christoffersen mentions, "their presence remained controversial."[258] For the most part, however, the *Balikatan* exercise had the support of the majority of Filipinos, and that Americans withdrew at the end of six-month period assuaged many.[259]

The campaign against Abu Sayyaf has seriously degraded the group's capabilities. From a peak of 1,000 fighters in the mid-1990s, it has dwindled to a few hundred. According to Rabasa, "there is now greater confidence in the government's ability to protect the population."[260] He further mentions that the government is improving the conditions in Basilan, providing medical services, upgrading roads and rehabilitating an airfield and a wharf.[261] Basilan was a success story, the United States did civic action projects like roads and water well, and there was no follow-up, which made the roads crumbling.[262] Trudin mentions that the Philippines could provide a model of how to fight global terrorism by a combination of force, economic aid and diplomacy.[263] On the other hand, Rogers argues that if southern Philippines are unaccompanied by real change and Mindanao returns to the status quo, as in past attempts to end the violence, the fighting will surely resume.[264] Roger further contends that the U.S. role typically focuses on promoting security and developments but failed to

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[257] Gaye Christoffersen, "The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Searching for Partners, Delimiting Targets," Strategic Insights, Center for Contemporary Conflict, NSA, Naval Post Graduate School. (2002): 1.

[258] Ibid., 1.

[259] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: The Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 205.

[260] Angel Rabasa, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorists," *The Adelphi Papers, Oxford Journals, 01 July 2003* <http://www3.oup.co.uk/adelph/hdb/volume_358/Issue_011> (02 February 2004), 54-55.

[261] Ibid., 55.

[262] Marites Vitug, editor in chief of the Philippine news magazine newsbreak cited in Trudy Rubin, "Study Philippines to Learn How to Fight Global Terror," 14 March 2004, <http://www.philly.com/mld/philly/news/columnists/8179411.htm> (15 March 2004).

[263] Trudy Rubin, "Study Philippines to Learn How to Fight Global Terror," *Philadelphia Inquirer,* 14 March 2004.

[264] Steven Rogers, "Beyond Abu Sayyaf," Foreign Affairs 83, no. 1 (2004), Pro Quest Database (17 March 2004).

recognize a simple truth: the traditional prerogatives of power in the Southern Philippines are incompatible with the thin veneer of democratic institutions.[265] Accordingly, the society in Muslim Mindanao remains feudal, conforming less to democratic ideals than to the style of the datus, the warrior-chiefs of old. Leadership is personal and paternalistic and functions largely above the law; power flows from gun and money.[266]

The Philippine Armed Forces failed to maintain the momentum generated by the joint *Balikatan* exercise in the second half of 2002.[267] As Abuza mentions, "a spate of bombings and a regrouping of rebel forces frustrated the United States."[268] In February 2003, American and Filipino officials announced another, larger exercise directed at the Abu Sayyaf presence in Jolo, and this was interpreted in the Philippines as a declaration that U.S. troops would be illegally deployed in a combat role.[269] The subsequent outcry forced the cancellation of the exercise.[270] President Arroyo, who announced in December 2002 that she would not run for reelection in 2004, backtracked from her original decision that would allow U.S. forces an expanded combat role.[271] Days later, the Philippines became a victim of a number of terrorist attacks in 2003. These were the car-bomb attack adjacent to a military airfield in Awang Airport in Cotobato, on the southern island of Mindanao on 21 February; the bombing on 4 March at the International Airport in Davao, Mindanao that killed 17 (including one U.S. citizen); the Sasa Wharf bombing on 2 April also in Davao that killed 15, a series of bombings in Koronadal City, Mindanao, that took more than 15 civilian lives as

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[265] Ibid., 4.

[266] Ibid., 4.

[267] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: The Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 205.

[268] Ibid., 205.

[269] Steven Rogers, "Beyond Abu Sayyaf," Foreign Affairs 83, no. 3 (2004), Pro Quest Database (17 March 2004).

[270] Ibid., 3.

[271] Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: The Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 205.

well as a number of kidnappings-for-ransom operations.[272] Further, the bombing of Superferry 14 that killed 116 on 26 February 2004 after an hour of sailing from Manila showed a dangerous new alliance of ASG and Rajah Solaiman that investigators fear could execute future attacks in the capital.[273] The Philippine government has been "in a state of denial" about the terrorist threat, and as a result, the United States, joined by Australia and Britain, has quietly warned the Philippine government that it has not been doing enough to crack down on terrorist groups in the country.[274] As Acharya mentions, "President Arroyo has walked a political minefield and risked substantial domestic discontent in soliciting American help in her own war against terrorism, even though the public is generally unsympathetic to the militants' cause".[275]

C.   GOVERNMENT CAPABILITIES

The Philippine government response to terrorism extends beyond courses of action, or intended courses of action, to include resources and capabilities available to the bureaucracy in the pursuit of its policies. For instance, the building of a large security force with modern equipment would be useless if the force lacks leadership training and experience. Likewise, if the bureaucracy or government authorities do not possess the knowledge or competent advice, the force would be committed beyond its capabilities. The attacked by Filipino troops on a hijacked Philippine Air Lines plane two days after it landed at Zamboanga Airport in Mindanao on 23 May 1976 is a case in point. Sobel mentions, "in an exchange of gunfire, the aircraft exploded in flames, three hijackers and 10 hostages died and 22 other hostages were wounded."[276]

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[272] U.S. Department of State, "*Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003, East Asia Overview,*" 29 April 2004, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31611pf.htm> (03 June 2004).

[273] James Hookway, "A Dangerous New Alliance", *Far Eastern Economic Review,* 06 May 2004, Pro Quest Database (07 May 2004).

[274] Raymond Bonner and Carlos Conde, "U.S. Warns the Philippines on Terror Groups," *New York Times*, 11 April 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/11/international/asia/11 Fili.html> (11 April 2004).

[275] Amitav Acharya, "State-Society Relations: Asian and World Order after September 11" in Worlds in Collision, eds. Ken Booth and Time Dunne (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 200.

[276] Lester Sobel, Political Terrorism Volume 2: 1974-1978 (NY: Facts on File, 1978), 236.

Government counterterrorism policy is, *per se,* a resource.[277] Policy can represent a major and extremely valuable resource in response to terrorism that include plans, organizational arrangements, equipment acquisitions, training, introduction of regulations, passage of legislation, publicity, domestic and international agreements.[278] Accordingly, policy can have negative aspects such as a poorly directed policy, an inconsistent or wrong policy, inadequately expressed or publicized can be as dangerous as the absence of policy. An example, as Rabasa explains, "President Arroyo had criticized her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, for succumbing to 'Malaysian and European pleas to hold the troops back,' and for allowing Libya to arrange a ransom deal with Abu Sayyaf."[279] In April 2000, Abu Sayyaf took 21 hostages including 10 foreign tourists from a diving resort in Malaysian state of Sabah. The kidnap netted Abu Sayyaf $20 million in ransom money reportedly paid by Libya.[280]

Since government counterterrorism policy is a resource, Dreyer mentions that "the allocation of scarce resources to dealing with these conflicts reduces revenues available for other governmental functions."[281] Jenkins, in an astute analysis of the effects of continued conflict, notes a general trend toward nations devoting a larger part of their resources to internal security functions.[282] The concerns over arms acquisitions have not dissipated from year 2000 to 2001 on defense spending in Asia-Pacific and armed forces strength.[283] In 2000, the Philippines, Malaysia and EU/NATO spent 1.8% of their GDP in defense spending

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277 G. Davidson Smith, Combatting Terrorism (NY: Routledge, 1990), 150.

278 Ibid., 150.

279 Angel Rabasa, "Political Islam in Southeast Asia: Moderates, Radicals and Terrorists," *The Adelphi Papers, Oxford Journals,* 01 July 2003 <http://www3.oup.co.uk/adelph/hdb/volume_358/Issue_011> (02 February 2004), 54.

280 Ibid., 54.

281 June Dreyer, "Subnational Groups, Unconventional Warfare and Modern Security Planning" in The Future of Conflict: The Seminar Series of the National Security Affairs Institute 1978-1979 (Washington, D. C.: National Defense University Press, 1979), 129.

282 Brian Jenkins cited in Dreyer, 129.

283 Charles Morrison and Christopher McNally, Asia Pacific Security Outlook 2002 (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 16.

and ranks 14th, 15th, and 16th respectively in Asia Pacific defense spending with North Korea being the 1st, United States as 8th, and Japan as 20th.[284] Such arms procurement of the Philippines is an indication of "guns against butter" policy. According to Montesano, "in the first nine months of 2003, the Philippines have a balance-of-payments deficit of $783 million, compared to a surplus of $751 million for the same period in 2002."[285] The deterioration in the country's balance of payments led some bank economists in the region to warn of a full-blown financial crisis for the Philippines in 2004.[286] An Asian Developmental Bank economists mentions, "the investment problem with the Philippines is a problem of many years, and the poor infrastructure of the country is not just a lack of investments last year but lack of investments over many years, many decades."[287] The economy is also suffering from domestic constraints and the Abu Sayyaf contributed to the decline in the stock market and a drop in the value of the peso.[288] Manila is beset with chronic budget deficits, largely because of poor tax collection, that forces the government to borrow heavily abroad and must deal with persistent communist and Islamic rebel insurgencies, widespread corruption and crime.[289] As McNally and Morrison mention, "the government will be able to achieve its economic agenda and restore confidence only with the cooperation of key institutions and political actors."[290]

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[284] The Military Balance 2001/2002 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2001) cited in Morrison and McNally, 15.

[285] Michael Montesano, "The Philippines in 2003: Troubles, None of Them New," Asian Survey 14, no. 1 (2004): 99.

[286] Montesano, "Philippines," 99.

[287] ADB economist Jesus Felipe cited by James Hookway, "Election To Provide A Test of Arroyo's Political Clout," Wall Street Journal, 07 May 2004 <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/ebfiles/ s20040507283336.html> (07 May 2004).

[288] Charles Morrison and Christopher McNally, Asia Pacific Security Outlook 2002 (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 137.

[289] James Hookway, "Election to Provide a Test of Arroyo's Political Clout," Wall Street Journal, 07 May 2004 <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/ebfiles/s20040507283336.html> (07 May 2004).

[290] Charles Morrison and Christopher McNally, Asia Pacific Security Outlook 2002 (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 137.

Philippine counter-terrorism policy has come a long way since the early 1970's due to a spate of bombings or terrorist attacks perpetrated against the government or U.S. companies. An example was the bombing of two U.S. oil company headquarters, Esso and Caltex, in Manila on 22 January 1971. The headquarters were damaged and a Filipino employee was killed.[291] Weeks later, a bomb exploded on the grounds of the U.S. Embassy in Manila. Damage was minor and no one was hurt.[292] The 1976 hijacking of a Philippine Air Lines plane on 07 April and 23 May by Muslim rebels indicates that terrorism "waxes and wanes" in the Philippine context since the 1970's. According to Dreyer, "the problem of terrorism is apt to become more, rather than less, acute in the future."[293] Jenkins foresees the possible emergence of a semi permanent subculture of terrorism, characterized by successive generations of terrorists replacing those suppressed.[294]

The Philippines, as a matter of policy, should adhere to "no concessions" in response to terrorist's demands including the observance of the rule of law, and international cooperation in combating terrorism. However, these policies are sometimes not followed due to the complex socio-political issues involved. An example is the Malacanang Memorandum Order Number 21 of the "no-concession" or "no ransom" policy.[295] However, President Estrada was criticized for allowing Libya to arrange ransom deal with Abu Sayyaf.[296] Abuza argues, "no politician can afford to antagonize his Muslim constituencies, and many perceive the war on terror as a political liability".[297] An illustration pertains to

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[291] Lester Sobel, Political Terrorism Volume 2: 1974-1978 (NY: Facts on File, 1978), 251.

[292] Ibid., 251.

[293] June Dreyer, "Subnational Groups, Unconventional Warfare and Modern Security Planning" in The Future of Conflict: The Seminar Series of the National Security Affairs Institute 1978-1979 (Washington, D. C.: National Defense University Press, 1979), 130.

[294] Ibid., 131.

[295] Malacanang Memorandum Order No. 21 signed by President Estrada on 31 October 2000 re updating the Government's Policy on Terrorism Particularly on Hostage-Taking Situations.

[296] Rabasa, "Political," 251.

[297] Zachary Abuza, "Learning by Doing: Al Qaeda's Allies in Southeast Asia," Current History, A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs 4 (2004): 172.

the controversial Balikatan 03-1 that was originally planned to be conducted in Sulu Island of Southern Philippines. Vice-President Teofisto Guingona expressed worries that the holding of the RP-US Balikatan 03-1 military exercise in Sulu could trigger more violence and bloodshed.[298]

Weakness in the internal security system can have drastic consequences on the well being of the nation.[299] Malaysia's readiness to use the Internal Security Act (ISA) on the 1987's Operation *Lalang* and 1996's arrest of the leaders of *Al-Arqam* movement led to political stability.[300] The main weapon against the terrorists has been the ISA, which has been used to silence political opponents as effectively as religious fanatics.[301] On the other hand, liberal conceptions of human rights challenged the legitimacy of the International Security Act, which allows detention without trial, a legacy of the Malayan Emergency (1948-60) that facilitated the suppression of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM).[302] Acharya argues that the response of Southeast Asian governments to terrorism provides ammunition to those who see democratization as part of the problem, rather than a solution, in confronting the terrorist challenge. The case for democratization is undermined when one compares the responses of Malaysia and Singapore to the swift detention under the ISA, with that of Indonesia and the Philippines.[303] Further, Eubank and Weinberg argue that the resurgence of terrorism has gone hand-in-hand with democratic politics and conclude that terrorist groups are 3½ times more likely to emerge in

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[298] Rommel Banlaoi, The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia (Quezon City: Strategic and Integrative Studies Center, 2003), 53.

[299] G. Davidson Smith, Combating Terrorism (London: Routledge, 1990), 178.

[300] Muthiah Alagappa, Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences (CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 530.

[301] Amitav Acharya, "State-Society Relations: Asian and World Order after September 11" in Worlds in Collision eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 200.

[302] Alagappa, "Asian," 593.

[303] Acharya, "State," 200.

democracies than in undemocratic countries.304   As Acharya explains, "the war against terrorism presents government with an opportunity to outmaneuver their political opponents and thus easily translates into war against freedom."305   The Arroyo governments lost this opportunity to rally and seriously unify the Filipinos against terrorism.

Moreover, legislation is an important response to the terrorist threat. Smith mentions that an important aspect of legislative response is an assurance that it serves to counter the threat of terrorism while not making serious infringements upon civil rights and freedoms.306   He further mentions, "constitutionally-correct emergency legislation should meet that requirement, although it may abridge certain civil liberties on a temporary basis."307   Farrel likewise argues, "where the legislation is lacking, government terror is made to appear justified through such actions as a declaration of a state of emergency and the issuing of decrees."308   Terrorist groups, on the other hand, make little or no pretense at legality and often engage in open defiance of the law.309   The Philippines has introduced anti-money laundering laws to enable courts to convict those who handle terrorist funds and assets. On 29 September 2001, the anti-money laundering law was signed by President Arroyo who mentions that money laundering allows criminals to preserve and enjoy the proceeds of their crimes and perpetrate such activities because the country had no anti-money laundering law before.310   Under U.S. and OCED's Financial Action Task Force

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304 William Lee Eubank and Leonard Weinberg, "Terrorism and Political Violence," cited in Peter Benesh, "The Growing Menace from Traders in Terror," Violence and Terrorism (Connecticut: Dushkin/McGraw Hill, 2000), 211.

305 Amitav Acharya, "State-Society Relations: Asian and World Order after September 11" in Worlds in Collision eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 201.

306 Smith, "Combatting," 255.

307 Ibid., 255.

308 William Regis Farrell, The U.S. Government Response to Terrorism: In Search of an Effective Strategy (Colorado: Westview Press, 1982), 121.

309 Ibid., 121.

310 President Arroyo's Speech during the Signing of the Anti-Money Laundering Bill at Ceremonial Hall, Malacanang on 29 September 2001. <http://www.opnet.ops.gov.ph/speech-2001Sept29.htm> (03 June 2004)

(FATF) pressure, the Philippines agreed to amend the law to a $10,000 limit because the original bill was watered down by Philippine legislators who proposed a threshold of $80,000.[311]   However, banks are likely to continue to protect the privacy of their customers, and hence, implicitly facilitate the continued use of the international financial system by transnational terrorists.[312] Yet even equipped with the new law, the Philippine government admits it has no idea where the Abu Sayyaf and MILF hide their assets, and the law does not regulate the *hawala* system of money transfers.[313]   According to an IMF/World Bank Study, "informal fund transfer systems (*hawala*) cannot be completely eliminated by means of criminal proceedings and prohibition orders, and thus addressing such systems will require a broader response, including well-conceived economic policies and financial reforms, a well developed and efficient payment system, and effective regulatory and supervisory frameworks".[314]   The Philippine government should have reformed its economic and financial status based on the IMF/World Bank study.   The U.S. Department of State mentions, "poor communication between Philippine law enforcement agencies and the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) remains an impediment to effective implementation of the amended Anti-Money Laundering Act."[315]   The amendments of the act granted Central Bank Personnel unfettered access to deposit accounts.   However, the Central Bank and the AMLC face logistic challenges due to a lack of information technology platforms to collect and process covered transaction reports.[316]   The Philippines must adopt "honest to

311 Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2003), 211.

312 Quan Li and Drew Schaub, "Economic Globalization and Transnational Terrorism," The Journal of Conflict Resolution, 48 No. 2, (April 2004): 235.

313 Abuza, "Militant," 211.

314 "Informal Funds Transfer Systems – An Analysis of the Hawala System, IMF and World Bank Study", December 2002 cited in Suppressing the Financing of Terrorism: A Handbook for Legislative Drafting (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund Legal Department, 2003), 66.

315 "Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003, East Asia Overview," *U.S. Department of State,* 29 April 2004 <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31611pf.htm> (03 June 2004).

316 Ibid., 9.

goodness" money laundering implementation plan, which is a condition of the Philippines removal from the FATF's (Financial Action Task Force) list of NCCT (Non-Cooperating Countries and Territories).

D.   INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND THE BUREAUCRACY

The central role of the Philippine bureaucracy pertains to accomplishing what government wants to do in combating terrorism. The bureaucracy can provide important insights into the identification of successes and failures in resolving or reducing the overall terrorist threat. In addition, by analyzing the mistakes or failures of the government, bureaucracy is a way of avoiding similar future pitfalls. The Philippine bureaucracy is the formal administrative mechanism through which different policies, programmes, and projects of the government are executed.[317] The bureaucracy consists of men and women, including other resources and materials in administrative agencies.[318] The 9/11 indelible memory of New York police, firemen, and rescue workers climbing the stairs of World Trade Center created a vivid image of what public service or bureaucracy can mean. The rescue of Gracia Burnham from Abu Sayyaf denotes a similar public service commitment in working with the government.

On the other hand, government behavior can be understood according to the Bureaucratic Politics Model that sees no unitary actor but many actors as players who act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals.[319] An illustration pertains to the competing views of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) on intelligence and security matters. President Arroyo, on her command conference on Anti-Terrorism, mentions that she has seen situations where the intelligence service of a specific area command does not have the same information as the Regional

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317 Raul DeGuzman, <u>Government and Politics of the Philippines</u> (NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 180.

318 Ibid., 180.

319 Graham Allison, "Model III: Governmental Politics," <u>Essence of Decision, Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis</u> (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1971), 144.

Police Director, or J2, and the GHQ does not know what a brigade knows.[320] Such bureaucratic competition and lack of coordination becomes exacerbated in conditions of resource scarcity.[321] This leads to intense competition over resources and funding, and a lack of cooperation between the services.[322] According to Abuza, "the Philippines have more than ten intelligence and security services spread across numerous cabinet offices, making coordination and information sharing all but impossible."[323]

Furthermore, problems in personnel administration have been haunting the Philippine bureaucracy. These include:[324] 1) the proper staffing of various agencies at both the national and local levels; 2) the non-observation or distortion of the merit principle in the recruitment and promotion of personnel; 3) the low salary scale of civil servants; 4) the frequent transfer of personnel, and 5) the problem of corruption. During his presidency, Ramos attracted numerous skilled executives and managers to important public positions. They were encouraged to commit their energies to grappling with some of the most difficult problems of development and change.[325] Under President Ramos, cabinet officials were widely known for their intelligence and commitment to reform.[326] According to Eaton, "Ramos actively pursued reform measures but moderately successful because congressmen – elected from single-member districts – aggressively defended their particularistic interests and the

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[320] President Arroyo's Speech during Command Conference on Anti-Terrorism at Cebu City on 27 March 2003. <http://www.ops.gov.ph/speeches2003/speech_2003Mar27.htm> (03 June 2004).

[321] Zachary Abuza, Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 236.

[322] Ibid., 236.

[323] Abuza, "Militant," 236.

[324] Alex Brillantes and Arturo Pacho, "The Bureaucracy" in Government and Politics of the Philippines, eds. Raul De Guzman and Mila Reforma (NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 201.

[325] Merilee S. Grindle, "The Good, the Bad, and the Unavoidable: Improving the Public Service in Poor Countries", in For the People: Can We Fix Public Service, eds. John Donahue and Joseph Nye Jr. (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 93.

[326] Ibid., 107.

discretionary powers under control."[327]   Eaton argues that legislators in candidate-centered electoral systems face incentives to work against reform because it harms their ability to provide selective benefits to constituents.[328] This is the case in the Philippines where dispersal of institutional decision-making power affects the country's overall pattern of policy management. An illustration pertains to a U.S. Department of State Report that mentions the Philippines, since 2001, failed to enact new anti-terrorism legislation for the second straight year.[329]   The report also mentions that major evidentiary and procedural obstacles in the Philippines hinder the building of effective terrorism cases including generic problems in the law enforcement and criminal justice systems such as low morale, inadequate salaries, recruitment and retention difficulties, and lack of cooperation between police and prosecutors.[330]   These conditions reported by U.S. Department of State will surely affect the Philippines response to terrorism.

Lastly, Philippine bureaucracy is beset by the perennial problem of graft and corruption, and even the prominent members of the past political leadership recognized such a problem.[331]   Other countries in the Asia Pacific, including China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Papua New Guinea, have all suffered from serious corruption at the top political level in recent years, leading to political instability, public disquiet, and public order incidents.[332] Corruption undermines legitimacy and the rule of law, generates public discontent, and destroys fiscal responsibility, as sources of government revenue

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[327] Kent Eaton, Politicians and Economic Reform in New Democracies: Argentina and the Philippines in the 1990s (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 61.

[328] Ibid., 61.

[329] U.S. Department of State, "Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003, East Asia Overview," 29 April 2004, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31611pf.htm> (03 June 2004).

[330] Ibid., 9.

[331] Brillantes and Pacho, "Bureaucracy," 197.

[332] John McFarlane, "Transnational Crime and Asia-Pacific Security" in The Many Faces of Asian Security, ed. Sheldon Simon (Maryland: Rowan and Littlefield, 2001), 211.

are diverted and decline.[333] The study of the College of Public Administration of the University of the Philippines on negative bureaucratic behavior pointed out that graft and corruption in the Philippines has strongly affected development efforts negatively.[334] Likewise, Christoffersen mentions, "military corruption is said to be a major impediment in tracking Abu Sayyaf."[335] The institutional rot of the Armed Forces of the Philippines is more serious than a mere matter of inadequate funding.[336] According to Torres, "Marissa Rante and other hostages, on their second night trek with Abu Sayyaf on 30 April 2000, passed at least five military detachments but those manning the posts seemed to have turned blind and deaf." [337] Some soldiers pretend they did not see the bandits and hostages, while others deliberately let the group pass.[338] There was a time when five Muslim militiamen guarding a military detachment even talked to Marissa's Abu Sayyaf guard telling them to hurry up while the commander of the militiamen is not looking.[339] Reynaldo Rubio confirms Marissa's story when they were rescued on 03 May 2000. Both were teachers of Claret School of Tumahubong, Basilan when Abu Sayyaf abducted them on 20 March 2000.[340] Despite the looming terrorist threat and protracted insurgency, it seems that the numerous efforts by successive administrators for reforms did not push through against the entrenched interest groups. As Banlaoi argues, "the Philippines does not have an overarching framework to put the acts of its government agencies together in

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[333] Ibid., 10.

[334] Brillantes and Pacho, "Bureaucracy," 198.

[335] Gaye Christoffersen, "The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Searching for Partners, Delimiting Targets," Strategic Insights, Center for Contemporary Conflict, NSA, Naval Post Graduate School. (2002): 2.

[336] Michael Montesano, "The Philippines in 2003: Troubles, None of Them New," Asian Survey 14, no. 1 (2004): 97.

[337] Jose Torres Jr., Into the Mountain: Hostaged by the Abu Sayyaf (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 2001), 147.

[338] Ibid., 147.

[339] Ibid., 148.

[340] Ibid., 148.

a pursuit of a common strategic goal, such as combating terrorism."[341] Even its participation in the global campaign against terrorism reveals its lack of a coherent strategy.[342]

E. CONCLUSION

The Philippine government campaign against Abu Sayyaf has seriously degraded the group's capabilities. However, the government needs to improve and to enhance its capabilities, policies, legislation, and internal security in combating terrorism. The constitutional limitation, the government capabilities, and the bureaucracy are the variables that affect the country's response to terrorism. These variables need necessary reforms in order for the government to resolve the threat of terrorism completely. The government must use its resources and capabilities available to undertake the needed task of restructuring the bureaucracy, eliminating corruption, and legislating and implementing anti-terrorism laws. A strong government capability with a unifying and coherent strategy is necessary to respond suitably to terrorism with greater resolve, widespread consensus and support.

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[341] Rommel Banlaoi, <u>The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia</u> (Quezon City: Strategic and Integrative Studies Center, 2003), 118.

[342] Ibid., 118.

V. CONCLUSION

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Philippine government's response to terrorism remains reactive rather than decisive and strategic. It still lacks the capacity to respond well to threats posed by terrorism. In many respects, the government has regarded terrorism as a war rather than as a problem of law and order that requires suitable police measures. This is evident in the lead role of the Armed Forces of the Philippines with the Philippine National Police as the supporting role in the war against terrorism in Mindanao. The measures that the Philippines have taken to fight terrorism amount to an incomplete strategy. The government has developed countermeasures to respond to terrorism as they occur, rather than conducting an assessment of the overall threat and then planning a comprehensive set of responses. The lack of comprehensive planning can be linked to the Philippines being the nexus between Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Abu Sayyaf, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. JI's ability to train a new generation of terrorists is linked to the protracted insurgency and the complex peace process in the southern Philippines. The anarchic region of Central Mindanao has become a training base for the Southeast Asian terror organizations and a refuge for Abu Sayyaf.

As illustrated in Chapter IV, the government failed to maintain the momentum generated by the success of "Balikatan 02-1" due to a lack of a unifying strategy. The Arroyo government lost this opportunity to rally and seriously unify the Filipinos against terrorism. Strong domestic public support is essential for an effective counterterrorism response. Despite the looming terrorist threats and protracted insurgency, it seems that the numerous efforts by successive administrators for reforms were not pushed through against the entrenched interest groups. The Philippines does not have an overreaching framework to put the acts of its government agencies together in fighting

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terrorism, and even its participation in the global campaign against terrorism reveals its lack of coherent strategy.[343] Furthermore, Philippine counter terrorist policies have historically been reactive, with the different government agencies and departments operating separately, resulting in lost opportunities and policies at odds with another. Currently, the government is using the "lead agency approach" in the implementation of its counterterrorism policies, but it is characterized by weak political institutions, poor resources and plagued by endemic corruption. It would be a challenge to coordinate and implement the counterterrorism policy operationally because the existing capabilities of governmental structure fall short of what is needed. Even the intelligence services are politicized and engaged in bureaucratic infighting when confronting threats to national security.

The Philippines have tried in the past, with only modest success, to combat the rise of terrorist radical Islamic groups through a range of political, economic, and military means. It has retaliated militarily, prosecuted terrorists, preempted terrorist attacks, implemented defensive measures, and addressed some of the causes of terrorism. To some degree, all suffer from limited effectiveness and applicability. A comprehensive strategy of political, economic and ideological measures, including calibrated military power should be adopted to counter terrorism. Therefore, the following options are recommended:

1.   Address Socioeconomic and Political Roots

The Philippine government should combat terrorism by addressing its socioeconomic and political roots. Getting the comprehensive strategy correct is important because the war against terrorism is a political one. The government should consider the perceived deprivation and other grievances that provide motives for violence. This includes political repression, the lack of autonomy, or depravity of their rulers, and other issues expressed directly by the terrorists and those who sympathize with their cause. ASG operates in places where the

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343. Rommel Banloi, The War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia (Quezon City: Strategic and Integrative Studies Center, 2003), 118.

government is weak and the capacity for violence (owning a gun) is an important element in local political dynamics. The counterterrorism efforts in the southern Philippines should not consist of tactical military victories alone, but a comprehensive political strategy is necessary to achieve long-term victory. Political reforms may open up a peaceful channel for dissent.

The other root conditions include the improvement of living standards and socioeconomic prospects in Muslim Mindanao. As mentioned in Chapter III, the roots of Muslim rage and alienation lie fundamentally in local political, economic and social issues, whether in Kashmir, Chechnya, Aceh, Patani or Mindanao. Dealing with terrorism requires broad and multidimensional efforts in winning hearts and minds. Poverty, a lack of services, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of opportunity have been the characteristics for decades in Muslim Mindanao. It is essential to address the fundamental political, economic and social grievances as the root causes of rebellion and terrorism.

2. No Concession to Terrorists

The Philippine government should make no concessions to terrorists. It should not pay ransoms, release prisoners, or change it policies or agree to other acts that might encourage additional terrorism. As illustrated in Chapter IV, President Arroyo criticized her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, for succumbing to Malaysian and European pleas to hold the troops back and for allowing Libya to arrange a ransom deal with Abu Sayyaf. The concession made by Estrada resulted in ASG's additional terrorism including money laundering, weapons procurement and recruitment to replenish ASG's losses and defections. This policy of "no-concession" is based upon the conviction that to give in to terrorists' demands places even more people at risk. This no-concessions policy is the best way of ensuring the safety of the majority of people.

3. Pursue Greater Regional Cooperation

ASEAN cooperation is crucial to long-term deterrence to terrorism. The Philippine government can benefit through multilateral and bilateral agreements

in the face of continued terrorist threats. ASEAN is the appropriate organization to take the lead on counterterrorism, as the mechanisms and processes are already in place such as the annual meetings of heads of state, foreign ministers, military chiefs, intelligence chiefs, and police chiefs.[344] Also, the Philippine government needs to follow up and enhance the trilateral anti-terrorism agreement it has with Malaysia and Indonesia on May 2002 that covers terrorism, money laundering, smuggling, drug trafficking, hijacking, people smuggling, and piracy. ASEAN +3, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) can serve as forums to operationalize the collaborative security and anti-terrorism activities.

4. Establish a Dedicated Intelligence Center on Terrorism

The success in combating terrorism is predicated on the availability of timely and accurate intelligence. Currently, several agencies and departments of the Philippine government process intelligence within their own facilities, and there is no consolidated center that collects and analyzes information from those agencies participating in anti-terrorist activities. Given the highly fluid and transnational nature of terrorism that the Philippines is facing, it is necessary to establish a central facility that would improve the government's capability to understand and anticipate future terrorist threats. It would also support national crisis management and provide a common database accessible to various Philippine agencies. The center should have the ability to identify and target the intelligence gathering and reconnaissance activities of terrorist organizations.

The intelligence center should also solve the institutional barriers of the powerful, autonomous and resilient Philippine intelligence agencies. There must be an intelligence reform to handle overlapping missions and functions of the said intelligence agencies. The shortfalls in intelligence sharing, intelligence databases, collection efforts, intelligence fusion and human intelligence should be solved immediately. These shortfalls must have a plan of action that should

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[344] Abuza, "Militant Islam," 249.

address policy, people, processes or technology in order to combat terrorism in the years to come.   Furthermore, private sector cooperation is needed, particularly with business people, journalists, and members of academe, who possess a reservoir of knowledge and perspectives.

5.   Implement Effective and Good Governance

The Arroyo government should implement effective and efficient governance with far-reaching policy reforms. The emergence of ASG denotes the government's weakness in capacity for reform as part of governance. Lacking also is the counterterrorism structure and strategy at the provincial, city and municipal level. The complexities of managing such a vast and institutionally diverse bureaucracy contributed to the lack of preparedness seen during the many terrorist attacks waged against the Philippines. The government must craft carefully its national strategy and method of implementation in the battle against terror. An effective and efficient bureaucracy, through good governance, can provide important insights into the identification of successes and failures in resolving the overall terrorist threat. In addition, by analyzing the mistakes or failures of the government, bureaucracy is a way of avoiding similar future pitfalls.

As mentioned in Chapter IV, the problems in personnel administration have been haunting the Philippine bureaucracy, especially corruption. The Ramos presidency attracted numerous skilled managers widely known for their commitment to reform. Lastly, good governance should enhance the country's preparedness against terrorism by instituting capacity building and transparency in the government. The citizenry and the private sector would be willing to share the counterterrorism responsibility if the majority of the Filipinos see efficient, honest, and effective governance.

6.   Legislation

Terrorism is a bipartisan issue. The increase in terrorist threats should be resolved by Congress to ensure appropriate punishment of terrorists. The Arroyo

administration and Congress need to work together to implement a national strategy or government-wide solution on overall leadership and coordination to combat terrorism. The focal point (either lead agency or Executive Secretary) in the government remains ad hoc and there is no clear consensus on whom and where the focal point should be for purposes of coordination, responsibilities and leadership. The focal point needs to address the overall leadership, coordination issues, including the budgetary requirements. The President needs to appoint a single focal point that has the responsibility and authority for all the leadership and coordination functions to combat terrorism. This focal point should be established by legislation to provide legitimacy and authority, and the Philippine President, with the consent of the Philippine Senate, should appoint its head. This would provide accountability to both the President and Congress. It would, likewise, provide continuity across administrations.

Furthermore, there should be a continuous review by Congress on the upgrade of security measures on airport and port security. This is to determine whether legislation or other administrative measures are necessary. Another is the identification of the roles of local governments, such as municipal, city, and provincial. Although combating terrorism is primarily a national government responsibility, provincial, municipal, and local emergency units are certain to be the first to respond to terrorism. The Executive and Congress should clearly define the preparedness and deployment of local governments` assets. The role of local government units should be included in the national strategy to combat terrorism. Congress's legislative role in combating terrorism, though limited, has important aspects. Aside from providing the needed resources for a sustained counterterrorist effort, it is the job of Congress to declare objectives/regulations on human rights, law enforcement and intelligence. Lastly, Congress supplies the set of counterterrorist tools needed by the executive branch in its war against terrorism.

B.   CONCLUSION

It has often been said that terrorism is a perennial and ceaseless struggle. Terrorism has existed for 2,000 years and owes its survival to an ability to adapt and adjust to challenges and countermeasures to identify and exploit its opponent's vulnerabilities.[345]   The government can neither eliminate terrorism out of Mindanao, nor protect Manila from terrorism until it applies the full force of the law not only to the terrorists and bandits, but also to officials guilty of corruption and use of public power for personal gain.   Without an effective government, the terrorist influence cannot be eliminated. What is needed is the political will to implement the necessary reforms in the bureaucracy. Chapter II demonstrated the need to enhance and to improve the organizational structure of the agencies of the Philippine government to address the problem of terrorism in the country.   It is imperative that overlapping missions and functions of various government agencies be handled accordingly.   The Department of National Defense (DND) should undertake an honest assessment of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) capability against terrorism.   The AFP and its intelligence service are spread too thin with other important and more pressing security threats to accomplish. For example, the AFP must focus on the revived threat posed by the communist New People's Army, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and the Abu Sayyaf Group, in addition to Al Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiyah, and other transnational criminals involved in drug trafficking, kidnapping, and money laundering.   Fighting transnational crimes, insurgency, and terrorism require rethinking of the AFP's capabilities, operational concepts, organizations, and ways of cooperating with other key actors in the campaign. Chapter II also explained that the structural weakness of the Philippine bureaucracy, as channels of policy action, affects the Philippine response to terrorism.   Therefore, Philippine policymakers must improve the government structure and its instrumentalities in order to play a vital role in the campaign against terrorism.

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[345] Bruce Hoffman, Testimony: Lessons of 9/11 (CA: Rand Corporation, 2002), 26.

This campaign requires a thorough analysis on how to improve the Philippine counterterrorism policy, the inter-agency coordination, intelligence sharing, and enhancement of military and police capabilities.

Chapter III discussed that the key to Abu Sayyaf's survival has been its ability to adapt to its environment, where resistance to the state is deeply embedded and where the government is weak in places where ASG operates. Chapter III also outlined Abu Sayyaf's organizational and operational tools in the maintenance of its terrorist capability. This raised the question of how best to counter it.

Even if the Armed Forces of the Philippines decimated the Abu Sayyaf, the unchanged conditions of the Muslim populace, injustice, inequality and poverty will continue to breed terrorism and rebellion. Operation Balikatan in 2002 did not completely eliminate the Abu Sayyaf because the situation that gave rise to ASG, such as poverty, the lack of basic services, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of opportunity is still present in Mindanao. Furthermore, the government should not ignore Al Qaeda's international reach and lingering presence in the Philippines. Instead of pursuing a predominantly military approach in eliminating Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist organizations, comprehensive political, economic, ideological measures, and carefully calibrated military power should be adopted to counter terrorists' organizational and operational tools.

This study has shown that the government must undertake the needed task of restructuring the bureaucracy, eliminating corruption, legislating and implementing anti-terrorism laws. The Philippines remains attractive to terrorist groups due to reasons mentioned in the preceding chapters. Said problems could not be solved by a military solution but by a fundamental institution-building necessary to address the root causes in the long-term. The threats of Abu Sayyaf still remain due to the continued presence in Southeast Asia of Al Qaeda's independent cells networking with the ASG and MILF. Central Mindanao has become a refuge for outlaws and a breeding ground for new terror groups. Abu

Sayyaf is making a comeback, and the group is renewing links with other terrorist and insurgent groups. Good governance and a comprehensive strategy are necessary to respond to terrorism with greater resolve and widespread consensus and support of the Filipino people.

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